

From: Ralph Meyer — RES
To: Paul Clifford; Robert Einziger — NRR
Date: 1/18/06 4:09PM — NMSS
Subject: Draft Notes for Phone Calls

Paul, Bob,

Please review and suggest modifications as needed in the attached notes. Tomorrow, when I get your response, I will put together a package of background material with these notes and we will give them to Tom Martin and Wayne Hodges. We will also try to get Jim Wiggins to make a call from RES.

You should feel free to elaborate and embellish for your boss, but I would like to have a common core so we sound like we are giving the same message.

Carl Paperiello has asked us to prepare a letter from the Chairman to the Secretary of Energy. The background package for the phone calls will also contain a draft of that letter, but it will not have much (any?) concurrence by that time.

There is obviously a compromise position available: 6 months extension, during which we run a bunch of integral tests and defuel a lot of cladding. But I don't want to start the bidding at that level when we have a reasonable argument for the whole thing.

Ralph

CC: Harold Scott; John Voglewede; Mike Billone

A-11

Notes for Phone Call
to
Philip J. Fink
Deputy Associate Laboratory Director
(soon to be ALD)
Energy Technology Division, which has the hot cells, reports to this ALD

1. We learned on January 13 that the Alpha-Gamma Hot Cell Facility (AGHCF) will be closed to future programmatic work.
2. I'm sure you are aware that NRC has a program in that facility that will be affected.
3. This NRC program has been underway since 1997 and is scheduled for completion in 2008. We have made a big investment (>\$18M) and want to finish taking data with the dedicated staff, custom equipment, and special techniques that were developed with our funding.
4. The work is at such an advanced stage that we have scheduled rulemaking activities and the development of other regulatory guidelines beginning this year. These activities were expected to run concurrently with verification testing during FY07-08.
- 5a. (NRR) Delays will force us to grant exemptions from our important LOCA regulation (10 CFR 50.46) for almost all refuelings, without having a basis for the exemptions that has been verified. Such exemptions also affect the market place as they imply a stigma on newer fuel designs, which are intended to provide improved performance.
- 5b. (NMSS) Delays in obtaining these data will further postpone the day that we can license casks for the movement of high-burnup fuel. This will increase congestion in already crowded fuel pools and could potentially interfere with plant operation.
6. We understand that your Director does not think the hot cells have been profitable enough and that there have been a small number of procedural violations in the AGHCF.
7. We also understand that the procedural problems related to the AGHCF have been or will be corrected so you can continue to use that facility for WIP work.
8. It seems clear, therefore, that the limited amount of remaining NRC work could be done in the AGHCF concurrent with your other work.
9. NRC has been a loyal customer in this facility for almost a decade, and we think you should accommodate our request to finish our work in an orderly manner.
10. At the present time, the NRC staff in three offices (RES, NRR, NMSS) are putting together background material and preparing a letter to be sent by our Chairman to the Secretary of Energy requesting his assistance in getting this NRC work finished.
11. We hope you will discuss this situation with your Director.