

June 20, 2006

Dr. Michael T. Ryan, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE'S
LETTER, DATED MAY 9, 2006, ON REPORT OF RESEARCH AT THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Dear Dr. Ryan:

I am responding to your May 9, 2006, letter to U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Chairman Nils J. Diaz. The subject of this letter was "Report of Research at the Department of Energy Office of Science, Technology, and International Programs (OST&I)." In this letter, you stated that Advisory Committee for Nuclear Waste (ACNW) supports enhanced communication between the NRC staff and OST&I, so that the NRC staff will be prepared to use, as appropriate, the information developed by OST&I in its assessment of Yucca Mountain repository performance.

As part of its pre-licensing interactions with the Department of Energy (DOE), the NRC staff has been following work conducted by OST&I. The NRC Staff has been encouraging DOE to provide greater visibility for this work. We are aware that DOE might use some of this information in a license application. The NRC has told DOE that any information used to support its license application must be generated using an adequate quality assurance program. The NRC staff is also working with DOE to explore possible public interaction on the OST&I program.

We welcome further observations from the ACNW.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
Commissioner Jaczko
Commissioner Lyons
SECY

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