



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION II  
SAM NUNN ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER  
61 FORSYTH STREET, SW, SUITE 23T85  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8931

September 6, 2007

MEMORANDUM TO: Loren R. Plisco  
Deputy Regional Administrator for Construction

FROM: Deborah A. Seymour, Chief **/RA/**  
Construction Projects Branch 1  
Division of Construction Projects

SUBJECT: Report on Trip to the MOX Facility

DATE(S) OF VISIT: August 27-28, 2007

PURPOSE OF VISIT: Inspector Accompaniment, Site and Applicant Management  
Familiarization

INSPECTORS OBSERVED:

M. Shannon, Senior Resident Inspector, MOX

ACCOMPANIED BY:

M. Kotzalas, Chief, MOX Branch, Special Projects and Technical Support Directorate,  
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards  
M. White, Summer Hire, Region II (RII)  
C. Abbott, Nuclear Safety Professional Development Program (NSPDP), Training and  
Development Branch, Division of Reactor Safety, RII  
D. Arroyo, NSPDP, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

SENIOR MOX MANAGER CONTACTED:

David Stinson, MOX Services President and Project Manager

OBSERVATIONS:

We received a site tour from Mel Shannon. During the site tour, Mel questioned an ongoing construction activity, and appropriately engaged the applicant to get his question answered. Mel conducted himself in a professional manner, and did an excellent job in leading the tour and answering our questions.

Margaret Kotzalas and I also met with David Stinson, the MOX Services President and Project Manager; George Shell, the Quality Assurance Manager; and Dealis Gwyn, the Licensing and Regulatory Compliance Manager. We discussed the current progress of the construction project and the construction schedule.

We also discussed the improvements in the MOX Corrective Action Program (CAP), the changes MOX had implemented to ensure that they had a strong field-engineer presence at the construction site; the importance of maintaining a strong QA oversight, including vendor oversight; and the vendor audit schedule. A plan was made to schedule a telephone conference to discuss the vendor audit schedule.

I asked for feedback on Mel Shannon and the implementation of NRC's regulatory program at the site. MOX senior management was complimentary about Mel's professionalism, and stated that they have a positive working relationship with straightforward communications.

Mr. Stinson did express a concern that NRC inspectors may use the MOX CAP to identify "easy" violations. I explained the NRC's policies on our review of CAPs and how and why we review and characterize issues identified in the CA program. Mr. Stinson also was concerned that individuals who were not qualified NRC staff could erroneously believe an insignificant or non regulatory issue was significant, and needlessly tie up MOX resources. I stated that if they believed these issues were occurring, they should notify me or the appropriate NRC manager for resolution.

We also discussed the threshold for issuing violations. Mr. Stinson asked that the NRC accurately document site activities, including violations and associated corrective actions, and remain sensitive to the fact that some individuals in Congress may look for reasons to cancel the project.

#### OTHER COMMENTS:

The meeting with site management was very productive, and I believe we each enhanced the other's understanding of our purposes and programs.

Docket No. 70-3098

cc: W. Travers, RII  
V. McCree, RII  
A. Howe, RII  
C. Ogle, RII  
C. Casto, RII  
H. Christenson, RII  
J. Shea, RII  
K. Kennedy, RII  
D. Collins, RII  
M. Layton, RII  
M. Shannon, RII  
A. Blamey, RII  
M. Lesser, RII  
M. Kotzalas, NMSS  
D. Tiktinsky, NMSS