

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

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FINAL REPLY:

Senate Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation

TO:

B. Keeling, OCA

FOR SIGNATURE OF :

** GRN **

CRC NO:

DESC:

Post Hearing Qs on the Safety and Security of
Spent Nuclear Fuel Transportation on
September 24, 2008 (EDATS: OEDO-2008-0791)

ROUTING:

Borchardt
Virgilio
Mallett
Ash
Ordaz
Cyr/Burns
Schmidt, OCA
Bagley, OEDO

DATE: 10/24/08

ASSIGNED TO:

CONTACT:

NMSS

Weber

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

Please prepare response to the Qs from the
September 24, 2008 hearing using the attached
format. Provide Q&As via email to Susan Bagley,
OEDO by November 5, 2008.

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Electronic Document and Action Tracking System

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Special Instructions: Please prepare response to the Q&As from the September 24, 2008 Hearing using the attached format. Provide Q&As to Susan Bagley via email by November 5, 2008.

Document Information

Originator Name: Sen. Comm. on Commerce, Science & Transportation

Date of Incoming: 10/24/2008

Originating Organization: Congress

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Addressee: Betsy Keeling, OCA

Date Response Requested by Originator: 11/21/2008

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Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Hearing on the Safety and Security of Spent Nuclear Fuel Transportation
September 24, 2008

Questions for the Record for Mr. Michael Weber
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Senator Inouye on Behalf of Senator Reid

- 1. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has recorded at least four accidents involving spent nuclear fuel shipments over the past 30 years. Please tell the committee about those accidents and how the NRC responded?**
- 2. While the risk for a major accident involving a nuclear waste shipment is not great, it still exists and one major accident after thousands of successful shipments would mean this entire program is a failure. How is the NRC prepared to respond to a worst-case scenario situation, in which there is a major radioactive release on a railway or a highway?**
- 3. The NRC reports prepared in the late 1970's estimated that sabotage of a spent fuel shipment in an urban area could cause hundreds of early fatalities, thousands of latent cancer fatalities and economic losses in the billions. In 1979, the NRC promulgated regulations to safeguard shipments from sabotage and terrorism. Has the NRC reconsidered these regulations or made any significant changes to them over the past 30 years?**
- 4. Since the attacks against America on September 11th, 2001, the NRC has studied the vulnerability of nuclear waste transportation containers. Why haven't the results of these studies been made available to the applicable state and local governments? If states and local governments are going to be involved in the transportation planning process, shouldn't they have more information about the risks involved? What can be done to involve state and local governments in the transportation planning process?**
- 5. In 2001, 11 train cars derailed while passing through the Howard Street Tunnel in Baltimore, Maryland, setting off a fire that lasted for days and was 1800 degrees Fahrenheit. Could the Department of Energy's (DOE) proposed multi-use transportation casks withstand such an accident?**

Senator Inouye

- 1. The National Academy of Sciences has recommended an independent examination of the security of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste transportation prior to the commencement of large-quantity shipments to an interim or final repository. Has the NRC had difficulties working with the DOE to request this type of examination? Why hasn't the NRC requested an independent assessment of nuclear waste transportation security? What is the NRC currently doing to expand the knowledge base for the secure transportation of nuclear waste?**

Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Hearing on the Safety and Security of Spent Nuclear Fuel Transportation
September 24, 2008

Senator Boxer

- 1. If the Department of Energy is responsible for shipments of waste to Yucca Mountain, what will be the role the Nuclear Regulatory Commission?**
- 2. Is the NRC planning to do an independent security assessment with DOE that would cover both shipments to Yucca Mountain and to an interim storage facility?**
- 3. Please explain the NRC's physical protection requirements for the transportation of spent nuclear fuel as they would relate to the transport of spent nuclear fuel to Yucca Mountain. What is the process for advance notification of State Governors prior to a shipment?**
- 4. You mention in your testimony that you are examining the MacArthur Maze accident in Oakland and the I-5/14 interchange tunnel fire in Northern Los Angeles County as part of your efforts to improve the security of commercial shipments of spent nuclear fuel, will you share a copy of the results when your studies are completed?**

Appendix I – Guidance for Preparation of Post-Hearing Questions

FORMAT FOR CONGRESSIONAL Q&As

QUESTION 6. Congressional questions are assigned to various offices for preparation of the answers.

(A) What is the typing format for responding to Congressional questions?

ANSWER.

Q&As are to be typed in Word and provided to the OEDO as directed on Green Control Ticket under Special Instructions or Remarks. Type each Q&A as a separate file (including multiple parts, [A, B, C, etc.]) to aid in later revisions and transmission of Q&As to Congressional Affairs. Use 11 pitch, Arial type style, initial caps only, and double spacing. Use four spaces between each paragraph. Side margins are 1-inch for both left and right; and 1-inch for the top and bottom margins. Do not use a required return after each typed line.

At the bottom right margin on each page in the footer text, indicate Committee, originating Office (not Division or Branch). Current date should appear directly below the Committee/Office. Subsequent revisions should reflect the revised date.

Inhofe/NRR
09/25/07

QUESTION 6.(A).

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If succeeding pages are required in answering the question, the question number and page number should be typed in the header margin text area, so that it appears at the top of each succeeding page (as shown above).

If enclosures are to be included with a response, indicate on Q&A (as shown below) and type question number and part (A, B, C, etc., as appropriate) on each enclosure. Provide an electronic copy of the enclosure, if possible.

Enclosure:

Sample Q&A Format

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