



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

December 23, 1991

The Honorable Ivan Selin  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Selin:

SUBJECT: PROGRAM PLAN FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE

Since December 1989, the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW) has provided at four-month intervals a program plan of anticipated Committee activities. This letter covers January through April 1992. We view these letters as a convenient avenue for us to share information on our proposed activities. We invite you to provide guidance on issues on which the Commission desires that we focus our efforts.

In preparing this program plan, we have considered the list of technical issues of particular interest to the Commission, requests of individual Commissioners, the EDO's list of proposed agenda items for the ACRS and the ACNW, the NRC's Five-Year Plan, and items of special interest and/or concern to Committee members. The priority for each issue proposed is based on information provided by representatives from the offices of the EDO, NMSS, NRR, and RES, as well as our own interpretation of the subject in relation to our activities as a Committee and our input into the regulatory process.

This program plan is based on the current best estimates of work output by the DOE, EPA, NRC staff, and their consultants and contractors, as well as our own views on how to deal with these issues most effectively. In addition to the full Committee meetings noted, we will hold Working Group meetings as necessary to facilitate full Committee review and action. There may be some revisions to this plan depending on the progress of NRC staff, applicant, and/or contractor studies and reviews as well as other factors beyond our control.

Full Committee meeting dates for this period are scheduled as follows:

|              |   |                               |
|--------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 39th Meeting | - | January 15-17, 1992           |
| 40th Meeting | - | February 20-21, 1992          |
| 41st Meeting | - | March 12-13, 1992             |
| 42nd Meeting | - | April 23-24, 1992 (Tentative) |

The Committee anticipates that it will consider the topics listed below during this four-month period.

January 15-17, 1992

- The Committee will continue deliberations to investigate the feasibility of a systems-analysis approach to review the overall high-level waste program, including the short and mid-range technical milestones for handling high-level waste, with the goal of reporting back to the Commission our recommendations as to the scope of such a review and the advisability of undertaking it. (High Priority)
- The Committee will review and comment on a revision to NUREG-1200, Standard Review Plan for the Review of a License Application for a Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility. (High Priority)
- The Committee will complete its review and comment on the draft staff technical position on "The Identification of Fault Displacement and Seismic Hazards at a Geologic Repository." (High Priority)
- The Committee will discuss a paper being prepared for presentation at the January 29-31, 1992 Low-Level Waste Forum winter meeting. The paper will be based on reports recently issued by the ACNW on various low-level radioactive waste topics. (Medium Priority)

February 20-21, 1992

- The Committee will continue deliberations to investigate the feasibility of a systems-analysis approach to review the overall high-level waste program, including the short and mid-range technical milestones for handling high-level waste with the goal of reporting back to the Commission our recommendations as to the scope of such a review and the advisability of undertaking it. (High Priority)
- The Committee will discuss points of interest following attendance at the second EPRI session on the EPA high-level waste standards. (High Priority)
- The Committee will be briefed by representatives of Louisiana Energy Systems on plans for their uranium enrichment facility. Topics of interest include the disposal of the depleted uranium and the licensing of waste related activities. (Medium Priority)
- The Committee will be briefed by representatives of a state and a consulting firm on techniques being used to assess a low-level waste facility. (Medium Priority)

March 12-13, 1992

- The Committee will continue deliberations to investigate the feasibility of a systems-analysis approach to review the overall high-level waste program, including the short and mid-range technical milestones for handling high-level waste with the goal of reporting back to the Commission our recommendations as to the scope of such a review and the advisability of undertaking it. (High Priority)
- The Committee will discuss long-range climate changes in the area of the southern Basin and Range. Discussions will center on the ability to predict climate changes and their associated impacts on the performance of a proposed high-level waste repository. (High Priority)

April 23-24, 1992

- The Committee will continue deliberations to investigate the feasibility of a systems-analysis approach to review the overall high-level waste program, including the short and mid-range technical milestones for handling high-level waste with the goal of reporting back to the Commission our recommendations as to the scope of such a review and the advisability of undertaking it. (High Priority)
- The Committee will be briefed on the adoption by EPA of a revised Hazard Ranking System for use in assessing the risk associated with the release or potential release into the environment of hazardous chemicals and/or radioactive materials. (Medium Priority)

Other Topics: (Will be considered as documents and time become available.)

- The Committee will be briefed by the HLWM staff on their position on penetration of the Calico Hills tuff and their review of DOE's Calico Hills/Risk-Benefit Analysis.
- The Committee will review a DOE study plan that has not been selected for detailed technical review by the NRC staff.
- The Committee will be briefed on the NRC staff's review of the DOE reports on the Exploratory Studies Facility Alternatives Study and site suitability analyses.
- The Committee will review the design basis accident rulemaking for a high-level waste repository.

- The Committee will be briefed by RES on planned research for high-level waste. These plans are outlined in draft NUREG-1406, High-Level Radioactive Waste Research Program Plan.

WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

Systems-Analysis Approach to Reviewing the Overall High-Level Waste Program, February 19, 1992, Bethesda, Maryland - The Working Group will discuss the feasibility of a systems-analysis approach to reviewing the overall high-level waste program, including the short and mid-range technical milestones for handling high-level waste.

The Impact of Long-Range Climate Change in the Area of the Southern Basin and Range, March 11, 1992, Bethesda, Maryland - The Working Group will discuss long-range climate changes in the area of the southern Basin and Range. Discussions will center on the ability to predict climate changes and their associated impacts on the performance of a proposed high-level radioactive waste repository.

Methods for Assessing Natural Resources at a Proposed High-Level Waste Repository Site, To Be Determined, Bethesda, Maryland - The Working Group will discuss methodologies for the assessment of the potential for natural resources at the proposed high-level waste repository site at Yucca Mountain. The relationship between such resources and the potential for human intrusion will be emphasized.

Residual Contamination Clean-up Criteria, To Be Determined, Bethesda, Maryland - The Working Group will review, discuss, and make recommendations on guidelines for radionuclide contamination limits for unrestricted use of sites that are or have been under NRC license.

This list represents our best estimate of the topics to be considered through April 1992. If you or your fellow Commissioners have additional items to suggest or proposed changes in priorities, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Dade W. Moeller  
Chairman

cc: Commissioner Rogers  
Commissioner Curtiss  
Commissioner Remick  
Commissioner de Planque  
Samuel J. Chilk, SECY  
James M. Taylor, EDO  
Robert M. Bernero, NMSS