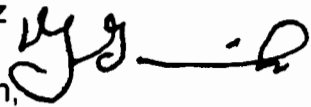




UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

December 2, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO: Commissioner Nils J. Diaz 
FROM: B. John Garrick, Chairman,
Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste
SUBJECT: HEALTH EFFECTS OF LOW-LEVEL IONIZING RADIATION

This is in response to your memorandum of October 16, 1997, which addressed the July 10, 1996, report to the Commission by the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW).

To our knowledge, the current status of ACNW's three recommendations remains as described in the August 9, 1996, letter from the Executive Director for Operations (EDO). This letter indicated that the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements' (NCRP's) committee assigned to this NRC-sponsored study, Scientific Committee 1-6 on Linearity of Dose Response, "...is an excellent representation of the expertise needed to complete this task" and that "All relevant data will be reviewed and incorporated into the NCRP Council Report." The EDO's letter also indicated that among the 55 collaborating organizations that will be given an opportunity to comment are "the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency, the Radiation Research and Health Physics societies, and a variety of medical academies, colleges, and associations."

The ACNW staff has talked to the NCRP Executive Director and has received a listing of the data and reports submitted to NCRP Scientific Committee 1-6. Although we could not attend any of the deliberations of Scientific Committee 1-6, because they were closed sessions, our staff has had discussions with several of the presenters.

The ACNW continues to believe that the health effects of low-level ionizing radiation are of fundamental importance and maintains an active interest in it. We intend to hold a working group meeting on the subject early in 1998 to gain insight on new scientific perspectives and implications of pending legislation. In addition, we will continue to monitor the progress of the NRC-sponsored grant to the NCRP, which is anticipated to be completed in 1998.

We appreciate your interest in this subject and will inform you promptly of future activities of the ACNW related to this most important topic.

cc: Chairman Jackson
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner McGaffigan