



Department of Energy
Savannah River Operations Office
P.O. Box A
Aiken, South Carolina 29802

MAR 18 2013

Mr. Mark Satorius, Director
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11545 Rockville Pike, Mail Stop T8F5
Rockville, MD 20852-2738

Dear Mr. Satorius:

SUBJECT: Letter of Concern (Type IV) Regarding U.S. Department of Energy Disposal Activities at the Savannah River Site Saltstone Disposal Facility (Your letter to Gilbertson dated April 30, 2012)

References:

1. Technical Evaluation Report for the 2009 Performance Assessment for the Saltstone Disposal Facility at the Savannah River Site (Letter, Camper to Gilbertson, dated 4/30/12)
2. Acknowledgement of US Department of Energy's Letter Dated July 12, 2012, Regarding US Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Letter of Concern (Type IV) Regarding Disposal Activities at the Savannah River Site Saltstone Disposal Facility, (Letter, Satorius to Spears dated August 31, 2012)

The purpose of this letter is to describe the progress made and activities that are planned by our respective organizations to resolve the subject letter of concern and address issues raised in the corresponding Technical Evaluation Report (Reference 1). Enclosure 1 identifies the activities that have occurred to date between our agencies related to this concern. Reference 2 concluded that a Type II Letter to the US Congress is not needed at this time. This conclusion was based on DOE's revised Tc-99 inventory projection for Saltstone Disposal Units 2, 3, and 5 which are anticipated to support disposal operations through approximately FY 2015. I am pleased to report that additional salt characterization data performed to date in preparation for upcoming salt treatment and disposal operations have confirmed the near term lower Tc-99 concentrations. This information was provided to your staff on January 14, 2013.

Enclosure 2 describes the status of resolving the major issues associated with the subject letter of concern. I welcome any feedback from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) as we collectively move forward to evaluate and ensure the protectiveness of the disposal operations at the Saltstone Disposal Facility.

I have enjoyed the open discussions by members of your management team during onsite tours in September and December of last year. I truly believe these are excellent communication opportunities between our agencies and wish to reiterate my open invitation for future visits. I am also more than happy to host future site tours for NRC representatives.

Members of your staff should continue to contact Pat Suggs (803) 208-6804 or Sherri Ross (803) 208-6078, of my staff if there are any questions or follow-up needed regarding this letter. In addition, please don't hesitate to contact me at any time at (803) 208-6072.

Sincerely,



Terrell J. Spears,
Assistant Manager
Waste Disposition Project

WDPD-13-23

Enclosures:

- 1) DOE and NRC Saltstone Disposal Facility Activities
- 2) Matrix Describing the Status of Resolving Issues Raised by NRC

cc: w/encl.:
Nishka Devaser, NRC