

File: Central-Midwest Compact

WM:s/f
NMSS:r/f
Section:r/f
Originator
PAltomare
MKearney
DMattson
JSurmeier
JOBunting

JGreeves
MKnapp
HMiller
MJBell
JStarmer
LYoung, OSP

CHICAGO TRIP REPORT SROMANO

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Joseph O. Bunting, Jr., Chief
Policy and Program Control Branch
Division of Waste Management

FROM: Stephen A. Romano
Integration Section
Policy and Program Control Branch
Division of Waste Management

SUBJECT: TRIP REPORT - CHICAGO, IL, DECEMBER 16-17, 1985

I accompanied Mr. Browning to a conference sponsored by the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety, "Managing Low-Level Radioactive Waste in Illinois: A Look at the Interim Period," December 17, 1985, in Chicago. The primary conference audience was Illinois Waste generators. A number of public interest group members also attended. Mr. Browning addressed the conference on NRC's low-level waste program. I followed Mr. Browning with a brief talk on the low-level waste outreach effort, and the mixed waste studies currently underway. The evening before the conference, Mr. Browning and I attended a conference reception and later met with IDNS Director, Dr. Terry Lash, and several of his staff, and Dr. Clark Bullard, Chairman of the Central Midwest Compact. The reception provided an opportunity to speak with several generators, and other conference speakers. The subsequent meeting with Dr. Bullard and IDNS was scheduled at our request to discuss compact siting plans, the upcoming IDNS international symposium on alternative LLW treatment and disposal methods, and other low-level waste topics of mutual interest. Following the conference, I met with John Starmer to debrief him on the prior meetings to prepare him for effective participation in an IDNS advisory group meeting on alternative disposal methods.

Several trip highlights follow:

- o Agreement was reached with IDNS to conduct staff-level discussions of technical aspects of the Sheffield site closure in near future. (John Starmer has follow-up action.)
- o A better picture was obtained of the alternatives to shallow land burial required by Illinois law. Dr. Lash appears most interested in the French earth-mounded concrete bunker system, but believes "alternatives" essentially include any departure from conventional practice.
- o NRC concerns and interests relative to the upcoming IDNS symposium on alternative disposal methods were shared, and the agenda reviewed. Mr. Browning has been placed on the agenda, as requested.

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- o Rapport was established with Dr. Bullard, Chairman of the Central Midwest Compact, and an offer of technical assistance was personally extended. Dr. Bullard (a former DOE Office Director and analyst at the Office of Technology Assessment) seems very interested in a growing low-level waste involvement.
- o Illinois projects IDNS involvement in both selection of a preferred disposal site (from among alternative sites proposed by a private contractor) and licensing (based on anticipated Agreement State status). While IDNS does not believe that a conflict of interest would be involved, I believe this matter should receive further scrutiny by NRC.
- o Mr. Browning and I lunched with members of several public interest groups that attended the conference. These included the Illinois League of Women Voters, the Sierra Club, Citizens For a Better Environment, and the Illinois Farm Bureau. Major interest was expressed in waste retrievability, and use of above-ground structures. Mistrust in governmental assurances that disposal would prove safe and environmentally sound was expressed.

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Please contact me if you have additional questions or concerns.

Stephen A. Romano
 Integration Section
 Policy and Program Control Branch
 Division of Waste Management

cc: R. Browning, WM
 L. Higginbotham, WMLU
 J. Saltzman, OSP
 R. Lickus, Region III

UFC :WMPC <i>SAR</i>	:WMPC <i>[Signature]</i>	:	:	:	:	:
NAME :SRomano	:MSKearney	:	:	:	:	:
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