

January 11, 1999

The Honorable Shirley Ann Jackson  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF A STANDARD REVIEW PLAN FOR DECOMMISSIONING

Dear Chairman Jackson:

During its 102nd meeting on July 20–22, 1998, the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW) heard a presentation from the NMSS staff on its plans to develop a Standard Review Plan (SRP) for use in reviewing and evaluating submittals by licensees to support the decommissioning of nuclear facilities. At its 103rd meeting on August 27–28, 1998, the Committee heard additional information on the selection of parameters for the DandD screening code and an update on the associated default parameter table. At its 105th meeting on December 15–17, 1998, the Committee received an overview of the staff's decommissioning plans for fiscal year 1999.

We found the staff's plans to date to be well thought-out. We applaud the increased interaction among the NRR, RES, and NMSS staffs. We view the institution of the Decommissioning Management Board as a welcomed step in ensuring agency consistency in the development of license termination requirements applicable to all facilities.

The Committee has the following observations on decommissioning that it believes are useful and timely to the development of the SRP.

1. We recommend that the staff continue to develop review criteria to provide a proper and consistent level of protection of public health and safety across a variety of sites.
2. We support the staff's plans to test the DandD code together with more site-specific alternative codes at a variety of sites. Results of these tests will add much to the understanding of the advantages of DandD as a screening tool. ACNW looks forward to hearing about the results.
3. We believe that it will be important to provide guidance to potential users on the appropriate selection of screening and site-specific codes for decommissioning.

4. The staff has instituted an effective program of licensee/stakeholder involvement. We support continuation of this effort.
5. We recognize that an efficient license termination process, coupled with a properly established standard for release of materials, could go far toward ensuring safe disposal of low-level waste and limiting decommissioning costs. We concur with the staff's position that the establishment and subsequent use of clearance criteria for decontamination and decommissioning activities should be a priority goal.

In closing, we have observed considerable progress in the development of the staff's plans and the necessary associated acceptance criteria. We recognize the magnitude and importance of the effort to develop the SRP and other relevant documents and analytical tools. The Committee intends to maintain an active awareness and participation in this activity as it evolves.

Sincerely,

/s/

B. John Garrick  
Chairman