



Louisiana Public Service Commission

POST OFFICE BOX 91154
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70821-9154

OCT 19 1999

Telephone:

225-342-4427

NOV 16 9 11 27

LAWRENCE C. ST. BLANC
Secretary

(MRS.) VON M. MEADOR
Deputy Undersecretary

EVE KAHAO GONZALEZ
General Counsel

November 10, 1999

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DOCKET NUMBER

PETITION RULE PRM 73-10
(64FR49410)

Honorable Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Secretary Vietti-Cook:

At the request of the Honorable Mike Foster, Governor of the State of Louisiana, please find the following response to a petition filed on behalf of Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn by Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and docketed (Docket No. PRM-73-10) be the NRC on July 13, 1999. The petitioner requests that the NRC amend its regulations governing safeguards for shipments of spent nuclear fuel against sabotage and terrorism. The State of Louisiana has been requested to review and comment on the petition, and submit its findings to the NRC by November 29, 1999.

In general, Louisiana finds that the petition raises some valid concerns. While the risk of sabotage and terrorism may be overstated, a review of the current procedures, safeguards, and disaster protocols is a prudent course of action.

The Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act (NWPAA) of 1987 designated Yucca Mountain as the site to be characterized for a national geologic repository for spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. This could result in as many as 104,500 shipments over a 40 year period. Louisiana agrees with the petitioner that a general strengthening of the regulations intended to safeguard spent nuclear fuel shipments is necessary (or at a minimum warrants further NRC investigation to produce a comprehensive assessment).

Louisiana feels that the risk of sabotage and terrorism may be overstated and thus the primary area of concern lies with the spent nuclear fuel shipments traveling through highly populated areas as Las Vegas, Nevada. Louisiana urges the NRC to review and strengthen, where necessary, the applicable procedures and safeguards to insure the security and safety of the spent nuclear fuel shipments, and the citizens that would be affected by any act of terrorism, sabotage, or more importantly, an accident which would result in the release of radioactive materials.

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The technology for tracking sensitive freight shipments is available and should be a required safeguard. Louisiana has been involved in the study and development of a Commercial Vehicle Location Operation/Intelligent Transportation System (CVO/ITS) Business Plan. Automatic Vehicle Location Technology (AVT) was one facet of the study and allows near real time tracking of vehicles.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this petition. If the Commission can be of any further assistance please advise.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lawrence C. St. Blanc', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lawrence C. St. Blanc,
Secretary

cc: Honorable M. J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.