



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 10, 1999

Lynn B. Connor
Apartment 22B
111 SW Harrison
Portland, OR 97201

Dear Ms. Connor:

Thank you for your memo of November 17 to Elizabeth Yeates expressing your viewpoints in regard to ADAMS and for the time you devoted to doing so.

The Agency-wide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) is a pioneer system in the federal government to combine electronic record-keeping for the NRC, making electronic documents available for the public, a search and retrieval capability for both the agency and the public, on line ordering for the public, and outreach to the widest possible audience via the Web. NRC appreciates input from the public on the system, most especially during the initial shake-down period.

Public Document Room (PDR) staff are gradually building their knowledge base in regard to ADAMS search and retrieval and hardware and software issues. In addition, they have the support of the staff that developed ADAMS, the ADAMS contractor, and the agency Information Technology (IT) staff. For example, IT staff posted to the Web solutions for maximizing the Citrix ICA window, in which you were interested. PDR staff are also the recipients of the public's recommendations for enhancements to ADAMS and forward them with comment to a coordinator, who in turn reviews and forwards them to the Configuration Control Board for action.

The ADAMS database is growing in size. By cob November 30, the Publicly Available Records System (PARS) contained 3563 documents. On December 2, the ADAMS processing backlog contained only 41 documents. Therefore, NRC information/documentation is available to the public in an indexed form through ADAMS (November 1 forward) and BRS/paper and microfiche copies (prior to November 1).

The PDR will continue to receive paper copy of ADAMS documents through December, as well as paper advance copies. PDR receipt of ADAMS paper copy documents is now behind entry of the documents into ADAMS because of both the priority given to achieving currency in ADAMS and the superior efficiency of electronic scanning over paper reproduction and distribution.

I have addressed the specific issues that you raised with regard to indexing rules and the format of displaying citations in a question and answer format in the attachment. When appropriate, reference is made to a section of the ADAMS Public Users' Guide on how to perform a function.

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The availability in the ADAMS Public Legacy Library of citations to all pre-November 1, 1999 documents is now projected for the end of February. BRS will remain in operation until the Legacy Library is complete and response time is acceptable.

Thank you again for beneficial views on NRC's ADAMS program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stuart Reiter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stuart" being more prominent than the last name "Reiter".

Stuart Reiter
Acting Chief Information Officer

December 8, 1999

CONCERN --- The description on the document being put in the ADAMS Title Field

The "Title" field is very important for searching and for displaying search results so that something is known about the content of the documents located (without viewing the text of each document).

RESPONSE:

The Title field in ADAMS is important. The title field should contain: the title of reports and other formal publications, the subject line of correspondence, and other helpful information. The ADAMS Title can be up to 254 characters in length.

Initially, given that we have the full text of the documents in ADAMS to search and review, it was thought that the titles could be less extensive and less structured than they were in NUDOCs and the BRS.

We are currently undergoing an effort to review, validate, and update the current procedures and indexing rules for capturing data in the ADAMS profile. The ADAMS staff is working with the NRC staff offices in ADAMS Working Groups to develop specific handling instructions, called Templates, for each type of documentation in the agency. Among many items, specific instructions are being developed for the profiling of these documents, including the use of the Title field. Templates are being completed for documents that the staff will generate and add to ADAMS and for documents that will continue to be captured by the Document Processing Center (DPC).

The titles in the ADAMS list of meeting handouts that you provided represent inconsistency in indexing, since in the sample I examined, the staff had provided information on plant/facility name, meeting date, and meeting purpose in all cases. I have spoken with the Chief of the Records Management Branch, which includes the DPC, and given her my mini-analysis and your list. I will follow up regarding application of existing guidelines for indexing and correction of errors.

December 8, 1999

CONCERN: Default View for ADAMS Search Result List and in Folders

The default information presented to the user as a result of searches often provides a very poor description of what the documents are.

RESPONSE:

We had to compromise when designating the default view for documents, which is shown both in folders and when returning search results. We had initially designated some of the more descriptive bibliographic information, such as Document Type, Author Affiliation, etc. for the default display for the staff and for the public. These are multi-valued fields. Unfortunately, having multi-valued fields designated in the default greatly increases the time taken to open a folder or to present the search results. The fields that we have chosen are single valued fields. We chose this option, knowing that the staff and the public could override the default. Information on how to do this is covered in the Users' Manual.

December 8, 1999

QUESTION & CONCERN: ADAMS Required Fields - Why and Why Not?

Why are only certain fields required to be completed in the ADAMS Document Profile? If they are not required, the integrity of the database and ability to find documents will be compromised.

RESPONSE:

The term "Required" has two contexts -- 1. Required by the software and 2. Required, when applicable, by policy and procedures. This situation existed under the previous system as it does under ADAMS.

1. **Required by the System:** When setting up the ADAMS profile, the software allows us to designate certain fields as required before the system will allow the user to complete adding or modifying a document. This means that a value must be entered. It does not necessarily mean that the value is accurate. During the design of the ADAMS document profile record, we made the following fields required because this data is applicable to all of the documents to be stored in ADAMS MAIN Library, which is the source of documents being added to the PARS Library for the public. These fields are also required by National Archives and Records Administration for electronic document systems storing Official Agency Records.

This feature of having required fields was also available in the data capture system for the previous systems (NUDOCS/BRS). The type and number of required fields was more limited. It did not require any fields that are not required in ADAMS.

MAIN Library and PARS Library -- Fields Required by software:

Title
Document Date
Document Type
Author Affiliation
Availability
Document Sensitivity
Estimated Page Count
Vital Records Category
Media Type
Physical File Location

2. **Required by Policy/Procedures:** The other fields are to be completed when a value is applicable for the document being profiled. Docket Number, Author Name, and Addressee information are examples of information that is applicable to many, but not all, agency documents. Procedures and standard indexing rules are in place for the DPC to capture data in the non-required fields when applicable. This process has not changed with the transition from NUDOCS/BRS to ADAMS. However, the change in systems and operational environment may well have resulted in some inconsistencies. As specific examples are brought to our attention, we'll work to resolve them, such as in the case of the list of meeting handouts you provided.

As in the past, the DPC is continuing to capture and index the same set of documents as was captured under the NUDCOS/BRS operations. This includes all the documents that are being made publicly available. In January, when ADAMS becomes the Agency's Official Record system, the NRC staff will take over the responsibility to capture and profile the documents that the NRC staff create. The DPC, along with Regional Capture stations, will continue to capture external documents being sent to the Agency.

We are currently undergoing an effort to review, validate, and update the current procedures and indexing rules for capturing data in the ADAMS profile. The ADAMS staff is working with the NRC staff offices in ADAMS Working Groups to develop specific handling instructions, called Templates, for each type of documentation in the agency. Among many items, specific instructions are being developed for the profiling of these documents, including what fields are required for completion. This is a requirement by policy and procedure in addition to the fields that have been set up as required by the software. Templates are being completed for documents that the staff will generate and add to ADAMS and for documents that will continue to be captured by the DPC.

Possible System Enhancements

It is possible to develop special custom software to enforce some rules on the format of data and to make certain fields required if other fields are completed. These efforts could increase the quality [completeness and accuracy] of the data capture. Currently resources are not available for such efforts.

An option might be to make certain additional fields "required by the software" but allow a "not applicable" value. This would force the staff and DPC contractor to at least take an action on that field. It will not force an accurate entry, just an entry. From a system point of view, the question is whether or not this is technically feasible and how it affects existing records. From a staff and DPC Contractor resource view, there is a recurring cost, because of the additional time to profile a document. This becomes a cost vs benefit question. We cannot accurately evaluate or quantify the problem until we have more experience with staff capture of documents or data on the magnitude of a problem.