

February 14, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO: John T. Greeves, Director
Division of Waste Management, NMSS

FROM: Larry L. Campbell
Projects and Engineering Section
High-Level Waste and Performance
Assessment Branch
Division of Waste Management, NMSS

SUBJECT: HIGH-LEVEL WASTE QUALITY ASSURANCE TASK FORCE
ACTIVITIES, FISCAL YEAR 1999 QUALITY ASSURANCE
MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT REPORT

On October 25, 1999, a telephone conference call took place between the staff of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS), Division of Waste Management (DWM), staff of the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM), and members of the OCRWM Quality Assurance Management Assessment (QAMA) team. The purpose of the conference call was to provide an opportunity to: (a) discuss and examine findings and recommendations reported in the FY 1999 QAMA Report on OCRWM's and Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office's (YMSCO's) Quality Assurance (QA) Program, and (b) consider the QAMA team's FY 2000 assessment activities.

During the conference call, the NRC questioned the implication in the FY 1999 QAMA Report that the OCRWM QA Program was effective in all areas. The NRC staff also questioned whether the report could have contained more discussion on the areas of the QA Program that were not fully effective for FY 1999. Further, the NRC staff stated that the QAMA bases for determining that the OCRWM QA Program was effective could have been addressed in more detail in the report. The NRC staff expressed disappointment that 6 of the 15 QAMA FY98 recommendations for OCRWM and 3 of the 11 recommendations for the Management and Operation Contractor were still open. In general, timely resolution of QAMA recommendations would indicate an effective QA program.

Should you have any questions concerning the October 25, 1999, discussion with QAMA, please contact me at (301) 415-5000 or Kien Chang at (301) 415-6612.

CONTACT: Kien Chang, HLWB/DWM/NMSS
(301) 415-6612

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ACTIVITIES, FISCAL YEAR 1999 QUALITY ASSURANCE
MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT REPORT

Attached for your information is the summary of the telephone conference call made on October 25, 1999, by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's), Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS), High-Level Waste Quality Assurance (HLW QA) Task Force concerning the FY 1999 Quality Assurance Management Assurance (QAMA) Report. The conversation included members of the HLW QA Task Force, staff of the Office of NMSS, Division of Waste Management (DWM), staff of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM), and members of the OCRWM QAMA team.

The purpose of the conference was to provide an opportunity for DWM, QAMA team members, and OCRWM conferees to discuss and examine results and recommendations reported in the FY 1999 QAMA Report on OCRWM's and Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Office's (YMSCO) QA Program.

The HLW QA Task Force and the DWM staff reviewed the FY 1999 QAMA Report prior to calling the QAMA team. The purpose of the call was to discuss the recommendations and findings contained in the FY 1999 QAMA Report and to provide NRC recommendations for the QAMA team to consider for its FY 2000 assessment activities.

During the conference call, the NRC staff expressed a concern about the FY 1999 QAMA Report implying that the OCRWM QA Program was effective in all areas. The NRC staff stated that the FY 1999 QAMA Report may have been more accurate if it had discussed more on the areas of the QA Program that were not fully effective for FY 1999. The NRC staff stated that it thought that the QAMA bases for determining that the OCRWM QA Program were effective should have been addressed in more detail in its report. The NRC staff expressed disappointment that 6 of the 15 QAMA FY98 recommendations for OCRWM and 3 of the 11 recommendations for M&O were still open. Collectively, the recommendations are not resolved in as timely a manner as the NRC staff would expect of an effective QA program.

Should you have any questions concerning the October 25, 1999, discussion with QAMA, please contact Kien Chang at (301) 415-6612.

CONTACT: Larry L. Campbell, HLWB/DWM/NMSS
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