



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

February 11, 2000

The Honorable Richard A. Meserve
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

SUBJECT: SUMMARY REPORT—115TH AND 116TH MEETINGS OF THE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON NUCLEAR WASTE, DECEMBER 14–16, 1999, AND JANUARY
13–14, 2000, RESPECTIVELY, AND OTHER RELATED COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Dear Chairman Meserve:

During its 115th and 116th meetings on December 14–16, 1999, and January 13–14, 2000, respectively, at Two White Flint North, Room T-2 B3, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW or the Committee) discussed the following issues and approved the following reports:

- Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste Round-Table Discussion With Yucca Mountain Stakeholders on the Role of Safety Assessment in Regulatory Decision-Making — Observations and Recommendations (Report to The Honorable Richard A. Meserve, Chairman, NRC, from B. John Garrick, Chairman, ACNW, December 23, 1999)
- Comments on the Importance of Chemistry in the Near Field to DOE's Yucca Mountain Repository License Application (Report to The Honorable Richard A. Meserve, Chairman, NRC, from B. John Garrick, Chairman, ACNW, January 11, 2000)
- Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Yucca Mountain (Report to The Honorable Richard A. Meserve, Chairman, NRC, from B. John Garrick, Chairman, ACNW, January 20, 2000)
- Rubblization — A Decommissioning Option (Report to The Honorable Richard A. Meserve, Chairman, NRC, from B. John Garrick, Chairman, ACNW, January 24, 2000)

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HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE

115th ACNW Meeting

1. Department of Energy's Yucca Mountain Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Wendy R. Dixon, Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Program Manager, Department of Energy (DOE), presented the status and schedule, agency interactions, proposed action, and no-action alternative for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste at the proposed Yucca Mountain repository. This was DOE's second briefing to the ACNW regarding the draft EIS (DEIS). The Committee expressed three concerns on the DEIS in the areas of transportation, no-action alternative scenario, and actual radiological consequences.

Conclusions/Actions

The Committee completed its report to the Commission on the DEIS during its 116th meeting January 13–14, 2000, and delivered it to the Commission on January 20, 2000.

2. Meeting With the Director of the Division of Waste Management, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

John Greeves, Director of the Division of Waste Management (DWM), Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, presented a list of topics that are high on the staff's priority list. These issues included HLW issues (the DOE's DEIS for Yucca Mountain, defense in depth, and the status of NRC's proposed HLW regulation 10 CFR Part 63) and decommissioning topics (the rubblization option and the Savannah River Plant Tank Farm license termination).

Conclusions/Actions

These discussions are part of a continuing dialogue between ACNW and DWM.

3. Radiological Assessment for Clearance of Equipment and Materials From Nuclear Facilities

Frank Cardile, Anthony Huffert, and Giorgio Gnugnoli of NMSS and Robert Meck of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research addressed the ACNW on NRC activities associated with examining how the NRC regulates the disposition of solid materials, such as metals, concrete, soils, equipment, furniture, and so on, that may have been contaminated with small amounts of radioactivity at NRC-licensed facilities that are being decommissioned. Possible disposition includes burial in licensed LLW sites, or reuse or recycling of materials containing very low levels of radiation. There are currently no regulations controlling these materials, and they are currently regulated on a case-by-case basis. In June 1998, the Commission directed the staff to consider rulemaking, with enhanced public participation, that would set a

dose-based standard for the disposition of solid materials. In March 1999, the NRC published a draft report for comment on "Radiological Assessments for Clearance of Equipment and Materials from Nuclear Facilities," NUREG-1640 (2 volumes) which provides means for evaluating alternatives for dealing with clearance. On June 15, 1999, the staff published in the *Federal Register* (64 FR 35090) for public comment an Issues Paper, "Release of Solid Materials at Licensed Facilities," on alternative courses of action for regulating solid materials. In the fall of 1999, public meetings on the Issues Paper were held in San Francisco, Atlanta, Rockville (NRC Headquarters), and Chicago. There were recommendations that materials in addition to those already analyzed be considered in the NRC's examination of the solid materials problem.

Conclusions/Actions

The ACNW will continue to follow this topic.

116th ACNW MEETING

1. Preparation of ACNW Reports

The Committee finalized reports on the DOE's DEIS for the proposed repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the rubbleization decommissioning options, and began to draft a report on the NRC's proposed HLW regulation 10 CFR Part 63.

2. ACNW Planning and Procedures

The Committee considered topics proposed for future consideration by the full Committee and Working Groups. These topics included strategic planning and self-assessment. The Committee discussed ACNW-related activities of individual members.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR THE 117th ACNW MEETING

- **Planning and Self-Assessment** — The Committee will conduct a self assessment to review the goals set in its 1999 Action Plan, and compare those goals to its accomplishments. The Committee will examine steps it can take to increase its operational efficiency. The Committee will also select priority issues for review in the coming months.
- **Guest Speakers** — The Committee will hear lectures on the use of probability and on waste minimization.
- **ACNW Planning and Procedures** — The Committee will consider topics proposed for future consideration by the full Committee and Working Groups. The Committee may also discuss ACNW-related activities of individual members.

The Honorable Richard A. Meserve

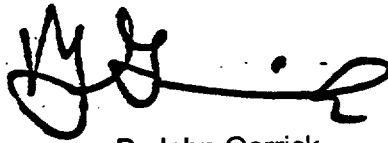
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- **Preparation of ACNW Reports** — The Committee will discuss planned reports on the NRC's proposed HLW regulation, the defense-in-depth philosophy, and the release of solid material (tentative).

OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

The 118th ACNW meeting will be held on March 28-30, 2000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. John Garrick". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

B. John Garrick
Chairman