

EDO Principal Correspondence Control

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FINAL REPLY:

Barbara Hamrick
Organization of Agreement States

TO:

Reyes, EDO

FOR SIGNATURE OF :

** GRN **

CRC NO:

Schlueter, STP

DESC:

ROUTING:

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AGREEMENT
STATES

Reyes
Virgilio
Kane
Silber
Dean
Cyr/Burns
Strosnider, NMSS
Felsher, OEDO

DATE: 11/02/05

ASSIGNED TO:

CONTACT:

STP

Schlueter

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS:

POC: Harry Felsher, OEDO

Template: EDO-001

E-RIDS: EDO-01



Organization of Agreement States

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Paul Schmidt, Chair-Elect, Wisconsin
Jared Thompson, Past-Chair, Arkansas
Tom Conley, Treasurer, Kansas
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October 25, 2005

Mr. Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director for Operations
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

SUBJECT: ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AGREEMENT STATES

Dear Mr. Reyes:

On behalf of the Organization of Agreement States (OAS) Executive Board (the Board), I am writing to express concern regarding the recent decision to rescind the authorization for the Regional State Agreements Officers (RSAOs) to attend the Annual Meeting of the OAS this year. While the Board understands and is sympathetic to the need to curtail non-essential travel at times, and is acutely aware of the obligation to implement Executive Office direction, the Board is concerned that the specific decision to cancel the attendance of the RSAOs at the Annual Meeting of the OAS did not take full account of the role the RSAOs play in the interaction between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Agreement States.

The RSAOs are charged with being a conduit between Agreement States and NRC management and technical staff. They also serve as key resource people for Agreement State programs, providing information about NRC policies and procedures, and tapping the appropriate technical expertise within NRC when complex questions arise. The Agreement States appreciate the fine job the RSAOs have done over the years, and rely upon interaction with the RSAOs to continue to enhance the cooperation and coordination between the NRC and the Agreement States.

Attendance at the Annual Meeting of the OAS, and at the Annual Meeting of the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD) is important for the RSAOs to fulfill their functions. These meetings provide opportunities for the RSAOs to get a direct briefing on important current and upcoming issues from the wide variety of speakers. It also provides the RSAOs an opportunity to hear State concerns on the issues raised in the presentations, and other NRC staff and management perspectives on these issues, during the discussion period following the presentations. This provides a unique forum for state-federal communication, and it is of particular importance to the RSAOs to witness and participate in these discussions in order to appreciate individual State concerns in the full context of the national radiation regulatory framework.

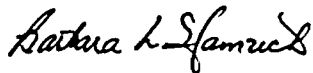
Perhaps even more valuable for the RSAOs, and the Agreement States as well, is the ability to confer privately on a face-to-face basis in a semi-casual setting during the meeting. This ensures the RSAOs are able to hear the views of those Agreement States that are less outspoken in public sessions, and to receive preliminary information, which may not yet be appropriate for public disclosure, from individual Agreement States. Combined with the multiple

cuts in the frequency of the RSAO's Periodic Meetings over the past few years, additional travel restrictions further hinder communications between the Agreement States and NRC.

The next two years are critical for NRC-Agreement State cooperation. The Agreement States are in the process of implementing the Alternative Approach to Increased Controls for certain radioactive sources. In addition, the Agreement States are working closely with the NRC on the implementation of the Naturally-Occurring and Accelerator-Produced Radioactive Materials provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. These projects will both involve close cooperation and coordination between NRC and Agreement States, and they will make the interactions of the RSAOs with the Agreement States yet more important.

The Board recognizes the need to sometimes make difficult decisions, and hopes that the input provided here, regarding the very important role the RSAOs play in the interaction between the Agreement States and the NRC, will have value to you if you face a similar decision with respect to the Annual Meeting of the OAS or of the CRCPD during the coming year. We appreciate your consideration of this matter, and please contact me if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,



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Chair, OAS
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CC: Mr. Martin Virgilio
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Ms. Debra McBaugh
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Ms. Alice Rogers
Secretary, OAS

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