

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 21, 2005

Meeting of the Ad Hoc Task Group on Long-Term Safety Criteria

On January 11-13, 2005, staff from the Division of High-Level Waste Repository Safety attended a meeting of an ad hoc task group on long-term safety criteria, at U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Headquarters in Washington, DC. The Nuclear Energy Agency's (NEA's) Radioactive Waste Management Committee (RWMC) established this task group to prepare a topical session on "long-term protection criteria and attending regulation" for RWMC's 38th Meeting in March 2005. The EPA hosted this meeting. Representatives from eight countries - Belgium, Canada, Germany, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States - as well as NEA staff and contractors, participated. Discussion included: a) the nature of long-term safety; b) the need to link time frames for compliance to the logic of the regulatory process; c) the role of active and passive institutional controls; d) the value of realism in assessments of long-term repository performance; and e) the degree of agreement among the levels of protection provided for geologic repositories by the regulatory criteria from various member states. At the end of the meeting, the group drafted a proposed agenda for the forthcoming topical session. A supporting document summarizing the task group's deliberations is in preparation.

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