



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION II  
SAM NUNN ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER  
61 FORSYTH STREET, SW, SUITE 23T85  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8931

August 16, 2007

John Swailes, Vice President of Operations  
and Chief Nuclear Officer  
National Enrichment Facility  
P.O. Box 1789  
Eunice, NM 88231

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 70-3103/2007-002

Dear Mr. Swailes:

During July 9-17, 2007, the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) performed an inspection of geotechnical, soil test control and measurement, and corrective action activities associated with the National Enrichment Facility (NEF) located in Eunice, New Mexico. The purpose of the inspection was to evaluate Quality Assurance Program implementation related to ongoing backfill activities and concrete batch plant preparation. The enclosed report presents the inspection results which were discussed with members of your staff on July 17, 2007.

This routine, announced inspection was an examination of activities conducted under your license as they relate to safety and compliance with the Commission's rules and regulations and with the conditions of your license. The inspection consisted of selected examinations of procedures and representative records, observations of activities, and interviews with personnel.

Based on the results of this inspection, no findings of significance or violations of regulatory requirements were identified.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," this document may be accessed through the NRC's public electronic reading room, Agency-Wide Document Access and Management System (ADAMS) on the internet at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html>.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact us.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Deborah A. Seymour, Chief  
Construction Projects Branch 1  
Division of Construction Projects

Docket No. 70-3103  
License No. SNM-2010

Enclosure: NRC Inspection Report 70-3103/2007-002  
w/attachment

cc w/encl: (See next page)

NEF

2

cc w/encl:

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SIGNATURE	MCS	RLJ	CDT				
NAME	MShannon	RJackson	CTaylor				
DATE	8/16/07	8/16/07	8/16/07				
E-MAIL COPY?	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO

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Letter to John Swailes from Deborah A. Seymour dated August 16, 2007

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 70-3103/2007-002

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**U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

**REGION II**

Docket No.: 70-3103

License No.: SNM-2010

Report No.: 70-3103/2007-002

Licensee: Louisiana Energy Services, L.P.

Location: National Enrichment Facility,  
Eunice, NM

Inspection Dates: July 9-17, 2007

Inspector: M. C. Shannon, Senior Resident Inspector, Division of Construction  
Projects (DCP), Region II (RII)

Accompanying  
Personnel: R. Jackson, Construction Inspector, Division of Construction Inspection, RII

Approved: Deborah A. Seymour, Chief  
Construction Projects Branch 1  
Division of Construction Projects

Enclosure

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Louisiana Energy Services, L.P. (LES)  
National Enrichment Facility (NEF)  
NRC Inspection Report 70-3103/2007-002

This announced inspection was a routine inspection of the licensee's implementation of their Quality Assurance (QA) program related to site geotechnical activities, inspection and test equipment, structural concrete procedural guidance, corrective action program, and review of previous non conformances. The inspection took place at the licensee's LES NEF construction site located in Eunice, New Mexico (NM). This inspection included a review of LES' QA program as it pertained to the ongoing backfill activities and batch plant preparation related to Quality Level (QL)-1 structures, density testing of the compacted backfill, and review of various corrective action documents.

### Geotechnical/Foundation Activities

Procedures associated with sub-grade preparation, soil lift placement, and problem identification and corrective actions were found to be adequate. No items of safety significance were identified. However, an Inspector Follow-up Item (IFI 70-3103/2007-002-001), Review Backfill and Backfill Compaction for QL-1 Structures, was identified to verify the adequacy of QL-1 backfill and compaction activities (Section 1).

### Inspection, Test Control and Control of Measuring and Test Equipment

No safety significance items were identified in the areas of procedure adequacy and usage, qualification of testing personnel, calibration of equipment, and field and laboratory testing of compacted soil. Soil test results indicated a wide range of densities and moisture content for backfill material. LES management made a decision to remove the compacted backfill material and replace it with engineered backfill (Section 2).

### Problem Identification, Resolution, and Corrective Action

The licensee appropriately identified the improper dedication of QL-1 backfill material and properly segregated the 600 cubic yards of material and implemented a commercial dedication plan prior to releasing the material for use. The licensee properly documented the deficiency into the corrective action program and implemented adequate and timely corrective actions (Section 3).

### Structural Concrete Activities

The inspectors evaluated the batch plant QA program related to the batching process, plant certification, equipment calibration, add-mixture certification, corrective action program, mixing and delivery procedures and these activities were found to be adequate. No items of safety significance were identified (Section 4).

### Attachment:

Persons Contacted  
Inspection Procedures  
List of Items Opened, Closed, and Discussed  
List of Acronyms Used  
List of Documents Reviewed

## **REPORT DETAILS**

### **1.0 Geotechnical/Foundation Activities (Inspection Procedure (IP) 88131)**

#### **a. Scope and Observations**

The inspection was focused on the Quality Level (QL) -1 placement of backfill (specifically Building 1001). In addition to field work the inspection also included the review of specifications, Quality Assurance (QA) surveillances, and testing procedures implemented in the field. Condition reports, (CR), deficiency reports (DR), nonconformance reports (NCR), and corrective action reports (CAR) related to geotechnical activities were reviewed. The inspection focused on direct observations and discussions with personnel performing the backfill and compaction activities related to QL-1 structures. The intent of the inspection was to determine if geotechnical activities were accomplished in accordance with design specifications (including American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) requirements), drawings and procedures.

The inspectors observed the soil lift placement, grading, compaction, and testing related to the QL -1 construction for Building 1001. Specification 114489-S-S-02300-7 Clearing, Grading, and Earthwork Material, Construction, and Testing, Revision 6, dated June 25, 2007, was reviewed to determine whether the sub-grade preparation, soil lift placement, fill compaction, and testing activities were adequately implemented.

The inspectors reviewed Project Specific Procedure (PSP) 11.05, dated June 18, 2007, Soil Inspection and Testing, which was referenced by the specification and described the methods used for inspection and testing of QL-1 and QL-3 soil materials and backfill activities. Sand cone testing associated with Building 1001 was observed to verify the adequacy of Washington Group International's (WGI) surveillance of subcontractors, the frequency of tests, and test procedures conducted.

The inspectors reviewed NCR# 28683-006, Incorrect Calculations of Sand Cone Tests, which identified incorrect dry density calculations identified by WGI. The inspectors reviewed the specific formula related to the test calculations and verified the proper corrective action associated with this NCR.

The foundation design methodology related to the type of fill, compaction percentage, bearing capacity, and sub-grade density was reviewed in order to verify the design standards and assumptions given in the Integrated Safety Analysis (ISA) were implemented. Additional site exploration commitments in the ISA were also verified through the review of updated soil reports.

During this inspection, the inspectors observed backfill and compaction activities related to QL-1 structures. The inspectors noted difficulties with the compaction of the backfill material native to the site. Discussion with personnel conducting the compaction and testing of the backfill noted that the backfill material was difficult to compact and was considered to be marginal because of it's sandy composition and inconsistent density.

The inspectors reviewed previous backfill material soil testing and results obtained from the test bed conducted previously in September 2006. The inspectors also reviewed various

2006-2007 reports from the WGI to LES. The reports documented difficulties encountered using the site obtained backfill material, such as varying soil densities, varying soil optimum moisture values, varying modified Proctor test results, inconsistent compaction effort and results, inconsistent material, ineffective blending of material, poorly graded material making it difficult to achieve compaction, and varying material unit weights in the same general location. The inspectors noted that the different materials did not vary in appearance. This made it difficult to identify material changes, poor/inconsistent Proctor test results, and to develop a suitable methodology for obtaining the required 95% compaction in the field.

On July 12, 2007, following completion of lift number five for Building 1001, the inspectors noted that initially three of five sand cone density tests had failed because the results were below 95% compaction (overall, test results varied from 90.9% to 101.5%). The area around each of the failed test spots was wetted down and recompacted in accordance with Section 3.24 of Specification No. 114489-S-S-02300-7. One sand cone density test area failed again and was recompacted for a third time. At this time, the lift was considered to be acceptable since the sand cone density test results were satisfactory.

The inspectors walked down the compacted lift area and observed some areas that appeared to be soft and loose. LES management requested detailed Troxler nuclear density testing of the complete lift (16 tests) and comparison Troxler nuclear testing around the previous acceptable sand cone test sites (20 tests). The Troxler nuclear density testing was conducted on July 14, 2007. LES' requested test sites ranged from 81.4% to 100.6% with 16 of 36 failing to meet the required 95% compaction. These issues with compaction were captured in WGI's corrective action program as NCR# 28683-020, Troxler Tests Located Numerous Areas That Apparently Did Not Meet the 95% Compaction Required by Spec-11489-s-s-02300-7. On July 16, 2007, the test results were provided to LES management. The test results indicated that the QL-1 backfill material was not adequately compacted. At that time LES management concluded that the density of the QL-1 compacted area was indeterminate and made a decision to remove the approximately 6,000 cubic yards of compacted backfill material in accordance with Section 3.24 of Soil Specification No. 114489-S-S-02300-7, and to replace the inadequately compacted backfill with engineered backfill. This issue was documented in the licensee's corrective action program as CR-07-0149. An Inspector Follow-up Item (IFI 70-3103/2007-002-001), Review Backfill and Backfill Compaction for QL-1 Structures, was identified to verify the adequacy of QL-1 backfill and compaction activities.

b. Conclusion

Procedures associated with sub-grade preparation, soil lift placement, and problem identification and corrective actions were found to be adequate. No items of safety significance were identified. However, an Inspector Follow-up Item (IFI 70-3103/2007-002-001), Review Backfill and Backfill Compaction for QL-1 Structures, was identified to verify the adequacy of QL-1 backfill and compaction activities.



## **2.0 Quality Assurance: Inspection, Test Control, and Control of Measuring and Test Equipment (IP 88109)**

### **a. Scope and Observations**

The inspection focused on direct observations of technicians performing testing in the field and laboratory, review of soil test reports, discussions with test personnel, and review of test personnel qualification records. The intent of the inspection was to ensure that testing activities were performed using approved procedures, by qualified personnel, and that test equipment was properly calibrated and controlled.

The inspectors reviewed the qualification's records for the soil testing technicians. The records were detailed and provided appropriate and clear documentation supporting the qualifications of the soil testing personnel.

The inspectors reviewed the calibration log and verified that the listed test equipment was in calibration. The inspectors also observed selected test equipment in the field and in the laboratory and verified that calibration stickers were in place and that the equipment was in calibration.

The inspectors observed soil density testing (sand cone and Troxler) in the field and moisture and modified Proctor testing in the laboratory. The technicians were knowledgeable in performing their activities and were observed to be meticulous in performing activities in the field. The technicians followed the procedural guidance for the activities they were performing. The inspectors also observed completion of calculations related to density testing (sand cone) and concluded that the test results were properly documented.

The inspectors reviewed the results of 34 Proctor tests related to the QL-1 backfill activities. The test results documented a wide range of maximum densities and optimum moisture for the backfill material. Maximum densities ranged from 111.0 to 127.5 and optimum moistures ranged from 7.5% to 11.0%, with little correlation between maximum densities and optimum moistures. The inspectors discussed with the licensee the difficulty in achieving reliable soil density test results with inconsistent soil densities, or to effectively compact the soil to greater than 95%. The inspectors noted that the licensee had sectioned off the backfill stockpiles into approximate 200 ft by 200 ft grids/sections. The licensee then performed one Proctor test for each grid/section and used that Proctor test to calculate the related backfill sand cone and Troxler soil density tests. Sand cone densities were found to range from 90.9% to 111.5%. The subsequent Troxler testing data indicated densities from 81.4% to 100.9%.

The inspectors noted that the testing indicated a wide range of unit weights and Proctor test values. The inspectors also discussed with the licensee that the high variability in the backfill material along with the limited Proctor testing could cause the sand cone density test results and the Troxler test results to be unreliable. As noted in Section 1 of this inspection report, the licensee removed the questionable backfill and replaced it with engineered backfill.

b. Conclusion

No items of safety significance were identified in the areas of field and laboratory testing, procedure adequacy and usage, qualification of testing personnel, soil density testing, and calibration of equipment. Soil test results indicated a wide range of densities and moisture content for backfill material. LES management made a decision to remove the compacted backfill material and replace it with engineered backfill

**3.0 Quality Assurance: Problem Identification, Resolution, and Corrective Action**  
**(IP 88110)**

a. Scope and Observations

The inspection focused on backfill and compaction related issues in the licensee's corrective action program. The intent of the inspection was to ensure that corrective actions were initiated as necessary.

The inspectors reviewed NCR# 0018, initiated on July 5, 2007. The NCR documented that backfill material (intended for QL-1 application) was delivered to the site on July 3, 2007, contrary to the requirements of Commercial Dedication Plan 26. During the inspection period, the inspectors verified that the approximately 600 cubic yards of fill material had been properly segregated while ongoing efforts were underway to dedicate the material and the source supplier in accordance with Commercial Dedication Process EG-101-104, dated March 22, 2007. The procedure was sufficiently detailed to adequately perform the dedication of commercial grade items and services.

b. Conclusion

The licensee appropriately identified the improper dedication of QL-1 backfill material and properly segregated the 600 cubic yards of material and implemented a commercial dedication plan prior to releasing the material for use. The licensee properly documented the deficiency into the corrective action program and implemented adequate and timely corrective actions.

**4.0 Structural Concrete Activities (IP 88132)**

a. Scope and Observations

The inspectors evaluated the adequacy of the LES concrete batch plant, located due north of the site. Since no QL-1 concrete had been produced at the time of this inspection, the inspection focused on the batching process, plant certification, equipment calibration, add-mixture certification, corrective action program, and mixing and delivery procedures.

The Concrete Batch Plant Inspections and Testing PSP 11.08, Revision 1, dated June 19, 2007, was reviewed along with required records associated with this procedure. Nuclear Technology Solutions (NTS) Specification 03310, Mixing and Delivery of Concrete, Revision 2, dated April 13, 2007, and NTS Specification 03311, Concrete Mix Design, Revision 3, dated May 11, 2007, were referenced by the procedure and specifications were

reviewed by the inspectors for adequacy. Implementation was verified through QA records as applicable and a visual walk down of the plant.

The inspectors also examined the on-site segregation and storage of aggregate, add-mixtures, water, and cement. The add-mixture certification for each chemical was reviewed. The National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) Certificate of Conformance for concrete production documentation was reviewed. Calibration certificates for plant scales were also reviewed to verify proper calibration frequency. The inspectors determined that the water used at the batch plant was stored in chillers to control the temperature. The inspectors noted that the water was supplied by the city of Eunice and had been tested for chloride content and organic contamination and determined to be adequate.

Although the mix design approval process for QL-1 concrete was not complete at the time of the inspection, the inspectors reviewed 4000F-1 Mix Design Approval Request, dated April 23, 2007. The inspectors determined that numerous test batches were produced and tested for strength, slump, air content, unit weight, and temperature. The inspectors noted that some of the slump, air, and water/cement ratio test results fell outside of specification range. This was intentionally done to demonstrate the capability of the mix. The inspectors determined that the final strength results for each batch were well above the (28 day) strength requirements of the design.

b. Conclusion

The inspectors evaluated the batch plant QA program related to the batching process, plant certification, equipment calibration, add-mixture certification, corrective action program, mixing and delivery procedures and were found to be adequate.

**5.0 Review of Violation 70-3103/2006-001-01**

The inspectors reviewed the licensee's violation closure package contained in LES document NEF-CAR-001, dated April 19, 2007; information contained in a letter "Outstanding Commitments Extracted From Reply to Notice of Violation (70-3103/2006-001-01)," dated March 22, 2007, information contained in licensee document LS-102-F-2, Correspondence Commitment Identification Form; Quality Assurance Surveillance 2007-001b; and LES Condition Report CR-2007-0026. The licensee's corrective actions appeared to be detailed and extensive.

The inspectors specifically noted the following:

For Part A of the violation, the inspectors noted the licensee had developed an extensive number of procedures; administered proficiency examinations to personnel; trained personnel on the new procedures; developed backfill flow charts; verified certification of test personnel; completed training on personnel roles and responsibilities; completed training on the Quality Assurance program; and developed a plan for backfill of QL-1 structures.

For Part B of the violation, the inspectors noted that the licensee had provided training related to procedure compliance, control of measurement and test equipment, identification and disposition of nonconforming items, identification and control of deviations, and definition of roles and responsibilities of laboratory and field engineering personnel for test control.

For Part C of the violation, the inspectors noted that the licensee had created new soil test forms. The inspectors observed the technicians using the forms and noted that the previously identified selection errors would not be a concern with the new forms.

For Part D of the violation, the inspectors obtained and reviewed the calibration log for the related soil test equipment. The inspectors noted that the listed equipment had been properly calibrated and the inspectors observed in the field and in the laboratory that various instruments had proper calibration stickers.

Based on the review, violation VIO 70-3103/2006-001-001 was considered closed.

## **6.0 Exit Meeting**

The inspection scope and results were summarized with the licensee on July 17, 2007. The inspectors described the areas inspected and discussed the inspection results in detail. Although proprietary documents and processes were reviewed during this inspection, the proprietary nature of these documents or processes was not included in this report. No dissenting comments were received from the licensee.

## **1. LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED**

### LES:

M. Bogre, Construction/Licensing Engineer  
M. Burruss, Civil/Structural Superintendent  
D. Copeland, Construction Manager  
S. Cowne, Licensing Manager  
J. Gearhart, Director Quality Assurance  
P. McCasland, Licensing Engineer  
W. Padgett, Licensing Engineer  
E. Parker, Field Engineer  
B. Robinson, Field Engineer  
G. Sanford, Vice President of Project Management  
G. Sergeant, Quality Assurance Engineer  
J. Swailes, Vice President Operations  
D. Vandewalle, Support Services Director

### Other Personnel:

S. Cotney, WGI Assistant Project Manager  
S. Fuller, WGI Quality Assurance Engineer  
T. Gardner, Apex Corporate Quality Assurance Manager  
M. Hendricks, WGI Project Manager  
M. Meister, WGI Quality Control Inspector  
W. Melvin, WGI Field Engineer  
D. Spearman, Apex Quality Assurance Specialist  
K. Wolfcale, WGI Project Quality Manager  
P. Visalli, Project Manager, NTS

## **2. INSPECTION PROCEDURE USED**

IP 88109 Quality Assurance: Inspection, Test Control, and Control of Measuring and Test Equipment  
IP 88131 Geotechnical/Foundation Activities  
IP 88110 Problem Identification, Resolution and Corrective Action  
IP 88132 Structural Concrete Activities

### 3. LIST OF ITEMS OPENED, CLOSED, AND DISCUSSED

<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Description</u>
IFI 70-3103/2007-002-01	Open	Review Backfill and Backfill Compaction for QL-1 Structures (Section 1)
VIO 70-3103/2006-001-01	Closed	Failure to Fully Implement NQA-1-1994, Quality Assurance Requirements for Nuclear Facility Applications (Section 5)

### 4. LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

ADAMS	Agency-Wide Document Access and Management System
ASTM	American Society of Testing and Materials
CAR	Corrective Action Reports
CGDPs	Commercial Grade Dedication Plans
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CR	Condition Report
DCI	Division of Construction Inspection
DCP	Division of Construction Projects
DR	Deficiency Reports
EAP	Engineering Assurance Procedure
IFI	Inspector Followup Item
IP	Inspection Procedure
ISA	Integrated Safety Analysis
LES	Louisiana Energy Services, L. P.
NCR	Nonconformance Report
NEF	National Enrichment Facility
NM	New Mexico
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NRMCA	National Ready Mixed Concrete Association
NTS	Nuclear Technology Solutions, LLP
No.	Number
PP	Project Procedure
PSP	Project Specific Procedure
QA	Quality Assurance
QL	Quality Level
RII	Region II
WGI	Washington Group International

## 5. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

WGI Project Specific Procedure PSP 11.05, Soil Inspection and Testing, dated June 18, 2007

NTS, LLC Specification No. 114489-S-S-02300-07, Project Specification Clearing, Grading, and Earthwork Material, Construction and Testing, signed June 8, 2007

NEF Quality Assurance Surveillance 2007-001b, Verification of WGI NEF CAR-001 Actions

NEF Quality Assurance Surveillance 2007-001c, Verification of WGI NEF CAR-001 Actions

NEF Quality Assurance Surveillance 2007-001d, Verification of WGI NEF CAR-001 Actions

NEF Procedure EG-101-103, Revision 1, Processing Nonconformance Reports (NCRs) Issued by WGI.

LES Condition Report CR-06-0050, Followup of NRC QA Inspection Violation.

LES Condition Report CR-06-0049, Followup of NRC QA Inspection Violation.

LES Condition Report CR-06-0048, Followup of NRC QA Inspection Violation.

WGI, Inter Office Correspondence, Effectiveness of Corrective Actions for AMEC, dated February 2, 2007.

WGI Work Plan 1600-UC-UM-CI-009, Site Excavation and Backfill-Building 1600CUB, dated February 7, 2007.

WGI Work Plan 1001-1/24-CI-003, Site Excavation and Backfill-Building 1001-Cascade Halls 1 & 2, dated April 4, 2007.

WGI Work Plan Pre Mock Up/Demonstration-WGA-A, dated March 6, 2007.

WGI Nonconformance Report 28683-006, Incorrect Calculations of Sand Cone Tests, closed on April 18, 2007.

WGI Nonconformance Report 28683-020, Troxler Tests Indicated Numerous Areas That Apparently Did Not Meet the 95% Compaction Requirements, dated July 16, 2007.

WGI Nonconformance Report 28683-018, Fill Material Delivered to Site Contrary to the Requirements of the Commercial Grade Dedication Plan 26, dated July 5, 2007.

NEF Procedure EG-101-104, Commercial Grade Dedication Process, Revision 0.

LES Condition Report 07-00 (draft) WGI's Failure to Implement Quality Program Requirements.

Specification #114489-S-S-03311-3, Concrete Mix Design, Revision 3, dated May 11, 2007

Specification #114489-S-S-03310-2, Concrete Mix Design, Revision 2, dated April 13, 2007

Document No. 3310 1.6.4 A, Scale and Meter Calibration, dated June 27, 2007

Certification of Conformance for Concrete Materials, dated April 18, 2007

NRMCA Certification of Conformance of Concrete Production Facilities, LES/NEF Plant, Eunice, NM, dated March 20, 2007

WGI Procurement - SC-28683-SC-6020 AMEC Earth & Environmental, Proposed Mix Design-4000F-1, Request for Approval, dated April 23, 2007

LES Procedure PSP 11.05, Soil Inspection and Testing, dated June 18, 2007

LES NEF Geotechnical Report and Boring log