

July 20, 2011

Mr. Thomas Gutmann, Director  
Waste Disposition Programs Division  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Savannah River Operations Office  
P.O. Box A  
Aiken, SC 29802

SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION RESPONSE TO  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY LETTER DATED MAY 20, 2011, FROM MR.  
THOMAS GUTMANN TO MR. ANDREW PERSINKO, RE: SECOND REQUEST  
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE 2009 PERFORMANCE  
ASSESSMENT FOR THE SALTSTONE DISPOSAL FACILITY AT THE  
SAVANNAH RIVER SITE

Dear Mr. Gutmann:

The purpose of this letter is to respond to the May 20, 2011, letter from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) regarding DOE's proposed response to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) second request for additional information on the 2009 Performance Assessment (PA) for the Saltstone Disposal Facility at the Savannah River Site (SRS). As has been discussed in recent exchanges between our agencies, DOE is implementing a strategy that includes performing a deterministic sensitivity evaluation (Case K) to support responses to the NRC's concerns with the base case of the Performance Assessment (PA) for the Saltstone Disposal Facility at SRS. The May 20, 2011, letter presented a table describing parameters associated with the proposed Case K evaluation and a request for the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to provide confirmation that the Case K approach would be acceptable.

The NRC agrees that the recent technical exchanges between our agencies have been helpful to the review process. Summaries of these five technical exchange teleconferences, which were clarifying in nature, are publicly accessible via NRC's document repository, the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), at ADAMS accession numbers ML111440310 (5/03), ML111440270 (5/05), ML111440857 (5/12), ML111440864 (5/17), and ML111440873 (5/19). The information discussed in these meetings was then summarized during a public teleconference held between NRC and DOE on June 2, 2011 (ML111780433).

In response to your request to confirm that development of Case K sets forth an acceptable approach toward resolving some of the remaining open questions associated with the NRC's review of the 2009 Saltstone PA, the NRC staff agrees that the approach seems reasonable. However, as was stated in the recent technical exchanges, final conclusions will be reached after NRC staff completes its detailed review of DOE's written responses to RAI-2009-02, including the results of Case K.

T. Gutmann

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If you have any questions or need additional information regarding this letter or pertaining to the NDAA monitoring process at the Saltstone Facility, please contact Nishka Devaser of my staff at (301) 415-5196.

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Andrew Persinko, Deputy Director  
Environmental Protection  
and Performance Assessment Directorate  
Division of Waste Management  
and Environmental Protection  
Office of Federal and State Materials  
and Environmental Management Programs

cc: WIR Service List

T. Gutmann

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If you have any questions or need additional information regarding this letter or pertaining to the NDAA monitoring process at the Saltstone Facility, please contact Nishka Devaser of my staff at (301) 415-5196.

Sincerely,

Andrew Persinko, Deputy Director  
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and Environmental Protection  
Office of Federal and State Materials  
and Environmental Management Programs

cc: WIR Service List

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