



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

9

April 30, 1999

MEMORANDUM TO:

Chairman Jackson
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield

FROM:

Janice Dunn Lee, Acting Director
Office of International Programs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janice Dunn Lee", is written over the typed name and title.

SUBJECT:

SUMMARY OF U.S. PARTICIPATION AT THE FIRST REVIEW
MEETING OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY

PURPOSE:

To inform the Commission of the results of U.S. participation at the first Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS), held in Vienna, on April 12-23, 1999.

BACKGROUND:

In SECY-99-088 (March 24, 1999), the Commission was advised that the Executive Branch was working with the Senate to obtain their advice and consent to ratification of the CNS. On March 25, 1999, the Senate voted to provide its advice and consent to ratification, and on April 12, 1999, the United States deposited its instrument of ratification with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Secretariat. The instrument was accompanied by the U.S. National Report, which had been drafted by Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff.

In an April 11, 1999 letter to Mr. Lars Högberg, Chairman of the Meeting of Contracting Parties to the CNS (Review Meeting), the U.S. acknowledged the lateness of its ratification, and requested "to participate in this First Review Meeting to the extent possible." On April 12, 1999, Mr. Högberg responded, inviting attendance at the final plenary sessions on April 21-23 with limited participation; i.e., to listen to the discussion, and to ask questions of clarification (Attachments 1 and 2). At that time the U.S. was also granted access to the other National

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Reports submitted for the meeting. The U.S. delegation to the Review Meeting was led by Ms. Carol E. Kessler, Senior Coordinator for Nuclear Safety, Department of State, with policy and technical support provided by the NRC's Offices of International Programs (Ms. Janice Dunn Lee, Acting Director) and Nuclear Reactor Regulation (Ms. Elizabeth Doroshuk, Program Manager).

DISCUSSION:

During the final three days of the two-week Review Meeting, the U.S. delegation was present to hear the oral summaries of the six country groups which had peer reviewed National Reports in their groups. The summaries were presented by each group's rapporteur. As had been agreed on both during the negotiation of the convention and in the process of developing guidelines for its implementation, the final written summary report was not country-specific, but a presentation of generic issues and concerns which arose in the overall group discussions. Access to written summaries of each of the review group meetings was limited to the members of the group.

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CONCLUSION:

The United States is now a full Contracting Party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Although the U.S. National Report has been submitted to the IAEA for distribution to the Contracting Parties, due to the late ratification of the CNS in the United States, the report did not undergo peer review during the first Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Vienna. The final report will be forwarded to the Commission for approval before final publication. The U.S. will begin full participation in the CNS according to the procedures and schedules established by the Contracting Parties for the next Review Meeting.

Attachments: 1. 4/11/99 Ltr. from L. Kennedy to L. Högborg
2. 4/12/99 Ltr. from L. Högborg to L. Kennedy
3. Convention on Nuclear Safety Summary Report (4/23/99)
4. Statement of the United States
5. Supplement to the U.S. National Report on the Convention on Nuclear Safety

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