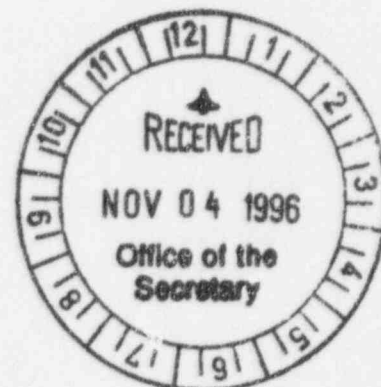


DSI-6

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From: M. Rose Byrne <MRB2@nrc.gov>
To: WND1.WNP1(strategic)
Date: 11/5/96 11:31am
Subject: DSI 6: HLW and Spent Fuel



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STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT
DSI 6: HIGH-LEVEL WASTE AND SPENT FUEL

1. What, if any, important considerations may have been omitted from the issue papers?

I suggest another potential activity under options 2 and 5. The NRC could write a generic letter to all of the power reactor licensees. We could tell them that we are not letting them out of their full core reserve even if DOE does not pick up or even take title to their spent fuel, and even if that means we have to shut them down. We could point out that since DOE has been ordered to take title to the spent fuel by January 31, 1998 and a presidential decision on the viability assessment (which could stop all work on the MRS as well as the repository) is due on December 31, 1998, it is unrealistic to assume that DOE will take care of their spent fuel starting in 1998.

I suggest another activity under options 1 and 2. I suggest that the NRC post information on our home page about the national high level waste program, including programmatic, technical, financial, and policy problems. I suggest that we include a tell us what you think form like the one that appears when you access <http://www.pbs.org> and access the series icon and then To The Contrary and then something like Speak Up!. By asking our browsers what they think, we will promote more interest in the issues, and maybe someone will have a good idea.

2. How accurate are the NRC's assumptions and projections for internal and external factors discussed in the issue papers?

I do not think that a Post Office style substitute for DOE will have any more luck than DOE has had in hanging onto the nuclear waste trust fund. The Post Office has a very simple pattern of cash flows: the first year after a postal rate increase, they make money, the second year, they break even, the third year they lose money and they ask for and get a postal rate increase. Also, all of the constituents in all of the senators and representatives districts will be irate if they don't get their mail on time, have their mail mangled, or can't get mail on Saturdays. But many Americans do not understand why the country needs a repository or a MRS. They think that not licensing any more nuclear plants will solve the nuclear waste problem. They do not understand that non-nuclear power plants take several years at least to get on-line. They do not understand that 20% of the nation's power comes from nuclear power, and that if all of the nuclear plants were just shutdown, we would have rolling blackouts coast to coast.

Option 3, the commission's preferred alternative, includes modifying parts 72 and 60. Karen Cyr approved all of these activities. William Olmstead has stopped all work on the revision of part 60, with the approval of the commission, saying that revising part 60 is totally illegal. The technical staff says that the subsystem performance requirements are impossible to implement not just at Yucca Mountain, but anywhere on earth. We want to revise part 60. We don't understand why Karen Cyr says we

can but William Olmstead says we can't.