

NEA Romania-Bulgaria
Workshop on
Radioactive Waste
Management and
Stakeholder
Engagement

July 25-27, 2022

Safety Case Communication for Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facilities

Chris McKenney

Risk and Technical Analysis Branch

Division of Decommissioning, Uranium Recovery, and
Waste Programs

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission



Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal

- Stakeholder Interactions
- Lessons Learned

Stakeholder Outreach and Involvement

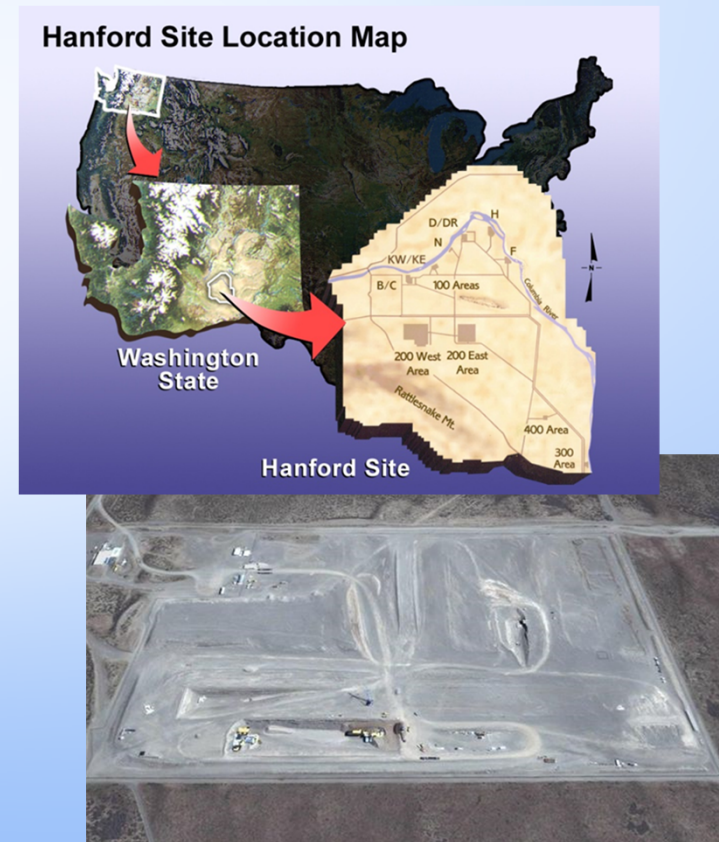
- Often of the outreach managed by the licensee/developer/operator
 - May establish citizen advisory panels
 - Work with local organizations
- Regulator's focus
 - Explaining regulations and allowing public comment
 - Identifying hearing opportunities
 - Discussing the decision-making process
 - Announcing review findings and decisions

Lessons Learned

- Building technical understanding among stakeholders.
 - Collaborate with local organizations repeatedly
 - Time is needed to develop dialogue and build stakeholder input
- Dealing with divergent views among stakeholders
- Tailor message to the audience

Example: Working with Indigenous Cultures

- Given the importance of the location to regional indigenous tribes, regulators sought input from the tribes when creating the culturally- specific scenario(s) in the safety assessment (2004).
- In 2009, the regulators in Washington State completed final Phase 1 closure cover design and began construction contracts for placing the cover.
- During this time, the regulators engaged in extensive outreach activities with the regional indigenous tribes.
- In 2010 the cover construction was put on hold
- In 2015 the regulators engaged with one of the regional indigenous tribe to technically review the safety assessment and scenarios.



Example: Collaboration on Safety Assessment

- Beginning in 2010, LLRW disposal facility in Utah began developing safety assessment for disposal of depleted uranium.
- The licensee and regulator have been holding continuing stakeholder interactions, including collaborative technical education sessions on the development of the safety assessment and open houses with presentation and small group Q&A.
- The regulator has also provided public access to documentation for transparency as well as public comment periods

Conclusions

- Operators and Regulators have different purposes and responsibilities for outreach
- Outreach is not done once but will continue across the entire life cycle of the facility
- Outreach activities can be broad to discuss planning or status of the facility or narrowly focused to address specific interests of a group(s) of stakeholders

Contact

➤ Chris McKenney, US NRC
Christopher.McKenney@nrc.gov
+1-301-415-6663

➤ Special thanks to the States of Washington and Utah for their assistance preparing examples for this presentation.