



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

October 2, 1998

The Honorable John T. Conway
Chairman
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
625 Indiana Avenue, N.W.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed is the compliance evaluation and disposal authorization for the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Low-Level Waste Disposal Area G. The Low-Level Waste Disposal Facility Federal Review Group (LFRG) conducted their review of the Performance Assessment and Composite Analysis for the LANL Low-Level Waste Disposal Area G and recommended that the Department authorize the continued operations of the LANL Low-Level Waste Disposal Area G subject to the conditions in the Disposal Authorization Statement. The Department accepted the LFRG recommendation and signed the Disposal Authorization Statement for the LANL Low-Level Waste Disposal Area G.

The Department has completed the following actions related to commitments VII.B.5.b.1, 2 and 3 in the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board Recommendation 94-2 Implementation Plan: "Complete Headquarters' Review of LANL Performance Assessment", "Complete Headquarters' review of LANL Composite Analysis", and "Issue Disposal Authorization Statement". The Department proposes closure of these commitments. If you have any questions concerning this information, please contact me at (202) 586-7710 or Mark Frei at (202) 586-0370.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James M. Owendoff".

James M. Owendoff
Acting Assistant Secretary for
Environmental Management

Enclosure



memorandum

DATE: October 2, 1998

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: EM-35

SUBJECT: Disposal Authorization for the Los Alamos National Laboratory Low-Level Waste Disposal Area G

TO: William John Arthur III
Assistant Manager, Office of Environment and Project Management
Albuquerque Operations Office

The Low-Level Waste Disposal Facility Federal Review Group (LFRG) has conducted a review of the "Performance Assessment (PA) and Composite Analysis (CA) for the Los Alamos National Laboratory Low-Level Waste Disposal Area G." The review of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) PA/CA was in accordance with DOE Order 5820.2A, Radioactive Waste Management, September 1988, Chapter III, Management of Low-Level Waste. The review was guided by several documents, including "Guidance for a Composite Analysis of the Interacting Source Terms on the Radiological Protection of the Public from DOE LLW Disposal Facilities," April 1996; "Revised Interim Policy on Regulatory Structure for Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management and Disposal," July 1996; and "Interim Format and Content Guide and Standard Review Plan for U.S. Department of Energy Low-Level Waste Disposal Facility Performance Assessments," October 1996. Per current policy, an independent review of the PA/CA was performed by a review team chartered by the LFRG. A Compliance Evaluation (attached) was performed by the LFRG based on the input from the review team report and the expert opinions of the LFRG membership. This Compliance Evaluation was subsequently used by the LFRG to develop the Disposal Authorization Statement (attached) which contains the LFRG's recommended formal authorization for disposal operations and the conditions with which the LANL Material Disposal Area G must comply.

I have accepted the LFRG recommendation. Therefore, Albuquerque Operations Office is authorized to continue operations of the Department of Energy LANL Material Disposal Area G for low-level waste disposal subject to the conditions in the Disposal Authorization Statement. Failure by LANL to comply with these conditions should be reported by Albuquerque Operations Office to the LFRG chairmen, and based upon their recommendation to me, could result in the revoking of the authorization and the immediate shutdown of the disposal facility.

Please also note the conditions of approval and actions (see Section 5.0 of Compliance Evaluation) which must be completed by LANL to continue authorization of the facility.

If your staff have any questions regarding this action or the process for working with the LFRG on meeting the conditions, they should contact Jay Rhoderick (301-903-7211) or Bill Murphie (301-903-7216), Co-Chairmen of the LFRG.

William E. Kuentzer
for

James Fiore
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Environmental Restoration
Environmental Management

Mark W. Frei

Mark W. Frei
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Waste Management
Environmental Management

Attachment

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(8-88)
EPC 107-901

United States Government

Department of Energy

memorandum

DATE:

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: EM-35

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Compliance Evaluation and Disposal Authorization Recommendation for Los Alamos National Laboratory Material Disposal Area G

TO: Mark W. Frei, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Waste Management
James Fiore, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Environmental Restoration

The Department of Energy Low-Level Waste Disposal Facility Federal Review Group (LFRG) has completed the evaluation of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Low-Level Waste Disposal Material Disposal Area (MDA) G Performance Assessment and Composite Analysis. The LFRG used the Review Report from the independent review team to form an opinion on the adequacy of the analyses in the Performance Assessment and Composite Analysis, which is reflected in the Compliance Evaluation (Attachment 1). The Compliance Evaluation was subsequently used by the LFRG as the basis for developing the draft Disposal Authorization Statement (Attachment 2).

~~It is the judgement of the LFRG to~~ recommend that you sign the attached memorandum to Albuquerque transmitting the authorization for disposal operations at the LANL MDA G subject to the conditions noted in the Disposal Authorization Statement. The Disposal Authorization Statement Constitutes approval of the Performance Assessment and Composite Analysis, authorizes operations of the facility, and includes the conditions of operation that the disposal facility must meet. The conditions which must be complied with for continued disposal include, among others, the requirement for both short-term (90 days) and long-term (several years) actions which will be submitted by the site to the LFRG. The Disposal Authorization Statement includes identified mechanisms for seeking relief from the short-term schedule requirements, if it is justified to the satisfaction of the LFRG. However, the transmittal memorandum takes a firm position that immediate shutdown of operations would occur if the conditions were not met.

Jay Rhoderick, Co-Chairman
Low-Level Waste Federal Review Group
Office of Waste ManagementWilliam Murphie, Co-Chairman
Low-Level Waste Federal Review Group
Office of Environmental Restoration

Attachments