High Level Waste Management
Yucca Mountain Viability Assessment Session

STATUS OF LICENSE PLANNING

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The DOE, in its preparation of the Viability Assessment for Yucca Mountain in September 1998, must develop and include a description of both a plan and the major activities necessary to submit a License Application to the NRC by February 2002.

This paper will describe the process and criteria to be used by DOE to evaluate the developed VA design and its supporting science and associated assessment analyses, in order to prepare the License Application. The snapshot developed at VA will provide a base from which the License design, needed science and additional assessments analysis can be developed.

The content of the paper will include a review of strategies to provide an appropriate level of detail for both pre-closure (fuel handling and packaging operations), and post closure (disposal analyses). Further, licensing strategies that define design criteria will be discussed. Such strategies consider hitherto undefined concepts in the licensing proceeding, such as treatment of uncertainties throughout the assessment analyses and defense in depth, which includes a safety argument to describe the need for and extent of redundancy, diversity in the design, as well as the use of margins. The NRC is expected to review the Licensing Plan with great interest as part of its Viability Assessment review

Although 10 CFR Part 60 alludes to these concepts in some measure, there are no defined precedents on those licensing arguments necessary to provide the NRC with a License Application for a Mined Geologic Disposal System. Accordingly, approaches discussed in this paper will indicate some strategies to provide the approach and detail necessary to proceed to licensing.

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