

Sunshine Act Meeting

DATE: Weeks of March 17, 24, 31, and April 7, 1997.

PLACE: Commissioners' Conference Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

STATUS: Public and Closed.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED:*Week of March 17*

There are no meetings scheduled for the Week of March 17.

Week of March 24—Tentative

Tuesday, March 25

10:00 a.m. Briefing on High-Burnup Fuel Issues (PUBLIC MEETING)
(Contact: Ralph O. Meyer, 301-415-6789)

11:30 a.m. Affirmation Session (PUBLIC MEETING) (if needed)

Week of March 31—Tentative

Monday, March 31

11:30 a.m. Affirmation Session (PUBLIC MEETING) (if needed)
2:00 p.m. Classified Security Briefing (Closed—Ex. 1)
2:30 p.m. Meeting with DOE on External Regulation of DOE Facilities (PUBLIC MEETING)

Week of April 7—Tentative

Wednesday, April 9

11:30 a.m. Affirmation Session (PUBLIC MEETING) (if needed)

Note: The schedule for commission meetings is subject to change on short notice. To verify the status of meetings call (recording)—(301) 415-1292. Contact person for more information: Bill Hill (301) 415-1661.

The NRC Commission Meeting Schedule can be found on the Internet at: <http://www.nrc.gov/SECY/smj/schedule.htm>.

This notice is distributed by mail to several hundred subscribers; if you no longer wish to receive it, or would like to be added to it, please contact the Office of the Secretary, Attn: Operations Branch, Washington, DC 20555 (301-415-1661).

In addition, distribution of this meeting notice over the internet system is available. If you are interested in receiving this Commission meeting schedule electronically, please send an electronic message to wmh@nrc.gov or dkw@nrc.gov.

Dated: March 14, 1997.

William M. Hill, Jr.,
SECY Tracking Officer, Office of the Secretary.

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[Docket 70-3091]

Notice of Availability of Memorandum of Understanding Between the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy Concerning the Cooperation and Support for Demonstration Phase (Phase I) of DOE Hanford Tank Waste Remediation System Privatization Activities

SUMMARY: On January 29, 1997, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Department of Energy (DOE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide a basis for cooperation and support during the demonstration phase (Phase I) of the DOE Hanford Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) Privatization Activities. The MOU establishes a cooperative process to support DOE in developing a regulatory program consistent with the NRC's regulatory approach.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy L. Bryce, Special Projects Branch, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, (301) 415-5848.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Memorandum of Understanding Between the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Department of Energy

Cooperation and Support for Demonstration Phase (Phase I) of DOE Hanford Tank Waste Remediation System Privatization Activities

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Department of Energy (DOE) is to establish the basis for cooperation and mutual support during the demonstration phase (defined as Phase I) of DOE's Tank Waste Remediation System (TWRS) Privatization activities. An objective of this DOE/NRC interaction is the development and execution of a comprehensive regulatory program by DOE that is consistent with NRC's regulatory approach for protecting workers, the general public, and the environment. DOE's regulatory program is to be structured to facilitate the possible transition of regulatory responsibilities from DOE to NRC at the start of the full-scale operations phase (defined as Phase II). During Phase I, DOE is responsible for implementing the TWRS Privatization regulatory program. This MOU provides for cooperation and mutual support in an integrated effort that provides for:

1. DOE to acquire capability to implement a program of nuclear safety and safeguards regulation consistent with NRC's regulatory approach.

2. NRC to acquire sufficient knowledge and understanding of the physical and operational situation at the Hanford waste tanks and the processes, technology and hazards involved in Phase I activities, to enable NRC (a) to assist DOE in performing reviews in a manner consistent with NRC's regulatory approach and (b) to be prepared to develop an effective and efficient regulatory program for the licensing of DOE contractor-owned and contractor-operated facilities that will process waste at Hanford during Phase II.

II. Introduction**A. Background**

During 1991, the Department of Energy (DOE) established the TWRS Program at the Hanford Site to manage, retrieve, treat, immobilize, and dispose of certain radioactive waste in a safe, environmentally-sound, and cost-effective manner. The requirements and commitments for the TWRS cleanup activities are documented in the Hanford Federal Facilities Agreement and Consent Order, also known as the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA). Under the TPA, DOE, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Washington State Department of Ecology have agreed to a timetable for cleanup of the Hanford Site.

DOE, through the TWRS Program, is making a fundamental change in its contracting approach at Hanford, utilizing privately-owned facilities on the Hanford Site for processing waste which contains special nuclear material. This change in contracting approach also necessitates a fundamental change in DOE's approach to regulation and oversight.

To accomplish the TWRS requirements, DOE plans to privatize treatment operations for the Hanford tank wastes. The TWRS Privatization is divided into two phases, a demonstration phase (defined as Phase I) and a full-scale operations phase (defined as Phase II). During both phases, DOE will purchase waste treatment services from a DOE contractor-owned, contractor-operated facility under a fixed-price type of contract; DOE will provide the feedstock to be processed. The DOE TWRS Privatization Contractor must finance the project; design the equipment and facility; apply for and receive required permits and licenses; construct the facility and bring it on line; operate the