



0051868

Department of Energy
Richland Operations Office
P.O. Box 550
Richland, Washington 99352
OCT 19 1999

00-ORL-003

Mr. Michael A. Wilson, Program Manager
Nuclear Waste Program
State of Washington
Department of Ecology
P. O. Box 47600
Olympia, Washington 98504

Mr. Douglas R. Sherwood
Hanford Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
712 Swift Boulevard, Suite 5
Richland, Washington 99352



Addressees:

PLUTONIUM FINISHING PLANT (PFP) HANFORD FEDERAL FACILITY AGREEMENT AND CONSENT ORDER (TRI-PARTY AGREEMENT) NEGOTIATIONS

On December 11, 1997, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) received your letter suspending Tri-Party Agreement transition negotiations for the PFP. In your letter you cited three specific issues which needed to be adequately resolved in order to reopen negotiations. Meetings with your respective staff in recent weeks has resulted in agreement that sufficient progress on the first two items cited in your December 1997, letter have been achieved. These items, uncertainty regarding scope and uncertainty regarding schedule, have been discussed and are now adequately developed to proceed with transition negotiations.

48440

The third issue centered on the designation of PFP waste. DOE has completed an extensive evaluation of the PFP inventory and has made a clear designation of what portion of the inventory is waste. Specifically, DOE requests the State of Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) meet in the near-future to review the DOE designation of PFP waste. The unclassified portion of the waste discussion will be accomplished within normal regulatory presentation modes. There is a small, but significant aspect of the waste designation that will require a classified discussion that is planned to occur immediately following the unclassified material. This is necessary to provide a complete picture of the waste designation issue and how DOE's pathway meets the intent of your letter of December 1997.

DOE believes that sufficient resolution of the three issues has been accomplished to reopen Tri-Party Agreement negotiations for PFP stabilization, transition, surveillance/maintenance and final disposition that will occur under the Tri-Party Agreement section 8 process. A number of regulatory issues regarding permitting and waste management need to be addressed. DOE recognizes that Ecology and EPA have raised the waste designation issue as a major concern in your letter to the Hanford Advisory Board on May 3, 1999. We believe that this concern must

Addressees
00-ORL-003

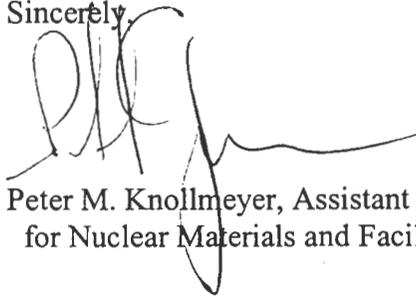
-2-

OCT 19 1993

frame the negotiations. DOE looks forward to working with you to achieve the most cost effective Tri-Party Agreement compliance strategy that is in concert with DOE Site Manager Keith Klein's vision for the Transition of the Central Plateau.

If you have any questions, please contact Larry Romine, Director, Materials Disposition Division on (509) 376-4747 or George Sanders, Program Manager, Office of Regulatory Liaison on (509) 376-6888.

Sincerely,



Peter M. Knollmeyer, Assistant Manager
for Nuclear Materials and Facility Stabilization

ORL:JKY

cc: J. E. Bramson, BWHC
J. R. Wilkinson, CTUIR
S. Mohan, Ecology
R. F. Stanley, Ecology
D. A. Faulk, EPA
J. S. Hertzell, FDH
A. M. Hopkins, FDH
R. E. Piippo, FDH
M. B. Reeves, HAB
R. L. Kaltreider, EM-62, HQ
J. S. Purvis, EM-65, HQ
P. Sobotta, NPT
M. L. Blazek, OOE
R. Jim, YN
TPA Administrative Record, FDH