



Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board

U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board's Post-Yucca Mountain Role

Dr. Daniel Metlay

Senior Professional Staff

U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board

About the Board

- The 11-person Board was created by Congress in the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act (NWPAA) of 1987.
- Several candidates for each position are nominated by the National Academy of Sciences solely on the basis of expertise.
- Members are then appointed by the U.S. President and serve a four-year term. They can be reappointed. Members serve part-time. A small professional staff supports the members.

About the Board (con't)

- Congress mandates the Board to conduct an independent evaluation of the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken by the Secretary of Energy regarding the management of high-level radioactive waste (HLW) and commercial, research, and defense-related spent nuclear fuel (SNF).
- The Board is an independent agency that is a part of the Executive Branch but ***not*** a part of the Department of Energy (DOE).

Administration Initiatives

- Proposed eliminating funding for the Yucca Mountain Project
 - Suspension/withdrawal of license application before the NRC
 - Withdrawal of other administrative applications, such as water permits
 - Dispersal of project personnel
- Created a Blue Ribbon Commission
 - Chaired by Lee Hamilton and Brent Scowcroft
 - Thirteen other members with diverse backgrounds
 - Interim report for public comment due August 2011
 - Final report due February 2012
- Reassigned OCRWM responsibilities within DOE
 - Office of Nuclear Energy
 - Office of Environmental Management

Board Priorities

- As part of its ongoing peer review of DOE activities, the Board will compile objective technical information to inform its technical review of DOE activities and the evaluation of waste management alternatives by Congress, the Secretary of Energy, and the Blue Ribbon Commission. The Board will examine the alternatives from the perspective of an integrated waste management system.
- The Board will compile information gained from its extensive experience with the U.S. nuclear waste program and from observing waste management efforts in other countries.

Board Priorities (con't)

- The Board will continue to monitor and evaluate DOE activities related to waste management and to report on the technical validity of that work to Congress and the DOE Secretary.

The Board's Evolving Role

- The Board's traditional role remains unchanged. It will evaluate the technical validity of DOE HLW and SNF management activities and reporting its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Congress and the Secretary of Energy.
- The Board believes its perspective and approach will be particularly valuable in evaluating the scientific and technical validity of alternative strategies for managing HLW and SNF.