

**HPS-GAO INTERACTIONS ON ISSUES
RELATED TO LOW-LEVEL
RADIOACTIVE WASTE**

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HPS TESTIMONY TO SENATE E & NR COMMITTEE

- **In September, 2004, HPS submitted written public witness testimony to SE&NR hearing on low-level radioactive waste oversight**
- **Reviewed the June 2004 GAO report on LLRW**
- **Offered suggestions for LLRW disposal**
 - **Predictable long-term disposal of Classes B and C wastes**
 - **Lack of options impact programs for safeguarding sealed sources**
 - **Lack of competition for Class A waste → high \$\$**

SUGGESTIONS (continued)

- **Integrated framework for managing and disposing of LLRW**
 - **EPA ANPR → RCRA Subtitle (c) for LLRW and LAMW**
 - **How to harmonize waste regulation (LAMW, AEA, TENORM, D&D wastes)?**
- **Support for NRC rulemaking for “Controlling the Disposition of Solid Materials”**
- **Non-regulatory alternatives to commercial LLRW disposal for certain materials**

GAO FOLLOW UP

- **Senate E&NR Committee tasked GAO for follow-up report**
- **GAO requested HPS response to questions relating to testimony**
- **Met with Dr. T. Laetz, senior policy analyst *et al.* at LANL (January 2005)**
- **Submitted written response to GAO questions by 1 March 2005**
- **Posted on HPS Web site (members only)**

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- **Waste classification and disposal should be risk-based**
- **Risk-informed waste disposal should be consistent and integrated with disposal of nonradioactive waste of comparable hazard**
- **Endorse the approach in NCRP 139 “Risk-Based Classification of Radioactive and Hazardous Chemical Wastes”**
- **Risk-based disposal options support alternatives beyond those currently legislated**

PRINCIPLES (continued)

- **From security perspective, disposal better option than storage**
- **Orphan sources can be public health and safety concern**
- **Orphan sources are tied to waste disposal when availability or cost inhibit proper disposal.**

POSITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Congressional action needed to grant access to all 50 states.**
 - **Likely that 36 states ≠ Atlantic Compact will not have access for Classes B and C wastes after 2008**
 - **Access of LLRW at a DOE-controlled facility**
 - **Commercial development and licensing of a new facility**
 - **NRC-EPA options for creating new disposal capacities for variety of waste streams**

POSITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(continued)

- **Encourage Congress to obtain stakeholder input of ways to reclassify waste based on risk**
- **Continue funding for existing orphan source recovery programs (DOE, NRC, States)**
- **Legislation for uniform control for safety and security of discrete radioactive sources not under AEA 1954 (HPS-OAS Position)**

POSITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

- **Allow permanent disposal of GTCC waste at WIPP, with stakeholder involvement**
- **High cost of waste disposal impeding use of nuclear technologies that benefit society**
 - **NAS/NRC (2001) “Impact of Low-level Radioactive Waste Management Policy on Biomedical Research in the United States”**
 - **Responses to EPA ANPR**
 - **University of California**
 - **National Institutes of Health**
 - **CORAR**
 - **State of Nebraska**

SUMMARY POINTS

- **A risk-based framework for waste classification and disposal**
 - **Integrates with other hazardous materials**
- **A range of disposal options**
 - **Federal land**
 - **Facilities**
 - **Agencies (primarily DOE)**
 - **Commercial options**
- **NRC control of all materials**