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For Immediate Release

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External Affairs

Full Board Meets with DOE on OCRWM Budget

On January 7 and 8, 1992, the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (the Board) will meet in Arlington, Virginia, with representatives of the Department of Energy (DOE) to discuss the current and future research priorities and funding allocations for the DOE's Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM), especially as they relate to the DOE's site-characterization program at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. Dr. John Bartlett, director of OCRWM, and associate directors and staff have been invited to participate in the meeting. Sessions will run from 9:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. on January 7, and from 8:30 A.M. to 12:00 noon on January 8, 1992. The meeting, which will be open to the public, will be held at the Key Bridge Marriott, Potomac Ballroom, 1401 Lee Highway, Arlington, Virginia 22209; 703-524-6400. This meeting is part of the Board's ongoing independent review of the DOE's civilian high-level radioactive waste management program.

Recent budget decisions have affected the DOE's priorities for its Yucca Mountain site-characterization program. Therefore, the Board has asked the DOE for a detailed review of the program's funding allocations and rationale. The Board also would like the DOE's best estimates of the funding and time required to complete a full site-characterization program. Of special interest to the Board are how funding reductions for fiscal year 1992 have affected current program activities, and how future funding decisions could affect the program. The Board also has asked the DOE to review any contingency plans that may have been developed for dealing with potential future budgetary shortfalls.

In addition to a discussion of the budget and related issues, the Board would like the DOE to provide a report on systems integration, including an update on the M&O contract for the OCRWM and for the Yucca Mountain Site Characterization Project Office.

The Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board was established by the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987. It is charged with evaluating the technical and scientific validity of activities underway as part of the DOE's civilian high-level waste management program. Specifically, the Board is evaluating activities relating to site characterization and the handling and transport of spent fuel and defense high-level waste.

Transcripts of the meeting will be available on a library-loan basis from Victoria Reich, Board librarian, beginning February 24, 1992.
