

Testimony of Mr. James Hutton  
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Before the  
Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board  
Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Public Hearing  
Walter Gerrells Performing Arts & Exhibition Center  
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Session 3

Good evening, Vice Chairman Roberson, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Santos. As I mentioned in the earlier session, the most important thing that must occur in order for us to restart operations at WIPP is to re-establish the safety envelope of the facility, including both the Documented Safety Analysis and the Safety Management Programs.

In the latest delegation of Safety Basis Approval Authority to CBFO, I have reserved concurrence with CBFO for approval of WIPP Documented Safety Analysis (DSA) Revision 5. EM has directed the contractor to use the 2014 revision of DOE Standard 3009 for this update to clearly establish expectations and requirements. A Safety Basis Review Team (SBRT) has been established that will be co- led by the CBFO Nuclear Safety Senior Technical Advisor (Jeff Carswell) and the EM Headquarters Chief Safety Officer (Dr. Robert Nelson). The EM Headquarters Director of the Office of Safety Management (Todd Lapointe) will serve as a senior advisor to the SBRT.

With respect to Emergency Management and response, EM Headquarters conducted a site visit in December 2014 in order to assess WIPP's progress in improving its Emergency Management capability. We reviewed the site's emergency responders and mine rescue team's capabilities, incident command training, emergency classification and categorization, as well as the Emergency Operations Center configuration and communication capability with the DOE Watch Office including the emergency management critical elements. We identified a number of opportunities for improvement and some objectives we felt were not satisfactorily met. We are currently following up with the site on corrective actions and improvement suggestions that we provided.

DOE Headquarters Fire Protection resources have been working with CBFO fire protection and Nuclear Waste Partnership (NWP) contractor resources to understand and clarify the interdependency between the Baseline Needs Assessment (BNA) and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) requirements. In my view, there is no conflict between DOE, National Fire Protection Association and MSHA requirements. Most recently, NWP briefed CBFO on proposed changes to the BNA including the underground firefighting strategy. Once NWP submits the proposed BNA, DOE will review it and act accordingly.

EM's expectation is that our facility maintenance and engineering programs must be effective in keeping critical structures, systems and components in a high state of operational readiness. We view this as a key component of ensuring the safety of our workers and facilities.

Finally, corrective action plans have been developed by NWP, CBFO, and EM Headquarters in response to the fire and Phase I accident investigation reports. Corrective action plan development for the Phase II Radiological report is in progress. We require an update on the corrective action status monthly. EM will require a review of the effectiveness of the corrective actions once actions are complete.

With that, I am looking forward to our discussion this evening.