

to field studies and, finally, to the actual construction of the repository.

● Finally, maintaining public trust and scientific integrity have to be part of the DNA of the new organization—valued throughout all parts of the organization and through all stages of repository development. Public trust requires early and continuing engagement with the public and state authorities. Scientific integrity requires transparency in data collection and interpretation, publication in peer-reviewed journals, and tolerance for the tough questions that go with any rigorous scientific process.

Recommendations

● Create a new, independent, not-for-profit, single-purpose nuclear waste management organization. This is not a new idea, and there are many models for such an organization. The Blue Ribbon Commission favored a FEDCORP structure. However, the Reset Steering Committee points to some unique advantages of a not-for-profit, utility-owned waste management organization (NUCO), particularly based on the clear success of this approach as evidenced by other national programs, such as in Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, and Canada.

A NUCO would align technical decisions for final geologic disposal from the moment that the used fuel is extracted from a commercial reactor until it is disposed of in a geologic repository. Financial incentives would also be aligned to support the final goal of geologic disposal.

Regardless of the type of organization, careful attention must be paid to the scope of its mandate, particularly in defining the types of waste that are the responsibility of the new organization.

Scientific integrity and public engagement will be essential to the success of any new organization.

● The NUCO should initially manage the storage, packaging, transportation, and disposal of commercially generated waste only. The responsibility for defense waste would continue to reside with the federal government or a FEDCORP if one were to be created.

The value of such an approach lies mainly with the desire to ensure the success of the NUCO. It would be a major accomplishment if a NUCO were able to successfully manage the disposal of commercially generated spent nuclear fuel in the United States. Such an accomplishment would account for the disposal of some 95 percent of the radioactivity of the nuclear waste that requires geologic disposal.

● Funding reform is essential to ensure the timely and appropriate use of the Nuclear Waste Fund. The fund should be transferred from Congressional control of annual budget allocations to full access by a new waste management organization.

The Reset Steering Committee recommends that the Nuclear Waste Fund be transferred from the federal government to the new waste management organization over a 25-year period. One of the advantages of a not-for-profit, utility-owned organization is that it would be responsible for collecting fees for nuclear waste management and allocating funds as needed in a timely and appropriate manner. ■

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