

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

DRAFT

**PUBLIC INFORMATION  
PLAN**

**TRANSPORTATION OF FOREIGN  
RESEARCH REACTOR SPENT NUCLEAR  
FUEL**

1998

# PUBLIC INFORMATION PLAN

## TRANSPORTATION OF FOREIGN RESEARCH REACTOR SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL

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### PURPOSE

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This public information plan is developed to ensure the exchange of accurate and timely information among State of California agencies, the United States Department of Energy (DOE), local authorities, the general public and the news media regarding shipments of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel (FRRSNF) through California on its way to the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). This will be accomplished by:

- Coordinating information between state, federal and local governments for dissemination to the public and news media.
- Providing local government, the public and the news media with written, verbal and electronic information regarding the transportation through California of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel.
- Establishing media points of contact for state, federal, and local governments for each agency and jurisdiction through which the FRRSNF shipments will pass.
- Providing appropriate state agency participation in Joint Information Center(s) (JIC)s during transportation through California of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel shipments.
- Establishing a state agency JIC in Sacramento to provide the news media with accurate and timely information in case of disruption of transport.

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### BACKGROUND

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In the early 1950s, the United States, through the "Atoms-For-Peace" program, provided nuclear technology to foreign nations for peaceful application in exchange for their promise to forego development of nuclear weapons. A major element of this program was the provision that the highly enriched uranium (HEU), needed in the early years to fuel the research reactors, would be returned to the United States as "spent fuel." This would prevent this "spent fuel" from being used to make nuclear weapons and thus allow the United States to maintain control over the disposition of the HEU provided to other nations.

The United States has agreed to take back spent nuclear fuel up to the year 2009. DOE has chosen the Concord Naval Weapons Station (CNWS) as the West Coast port of entry. The first of these spent nuclear fuel shipment will arrive at CNWS during the summer of 1998, followed by no more than four shipments over the next eleven years. Governor Wilson has very strongly stated his opposition to DOE's decision to use California as the West Coast port of entry. "In a June 1998 letter to a local government official, Governor Wilson stated that he finds DOE's continued preference for using Concord unreasonable, in spite of the more logical alternatives for ports of entry for these shipments.

However, given DOE's insistence on starting these shipments, the Governor has directed all relevant state agencies to take all steps necessary to safeguard the public's health and safety." California agencies have been preparing to receive the shipments by providing first responder training and facilitating communication among pertinent personnel in the counties affected.

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## STRATEGY

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To communicate state and local safety-related public information relating to the shipment of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel. This plan will focus on informing local government, elected officials, public entities, news media and other publics along the DOE selected route about the shipments, before, during and after they occur. Agency points of contact will be identified and a listed. Due to the safeguard status of the shipments, no specific shipping dates, schedule, physical security plans and information indicators will be announced.

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## KEY MESSAGES

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Key messages to be delivered regarding the transportation of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel to INEEL are as follows:

- The main priority of state agencies and local government during the transportation of spent nuclear fuel shipments traveling to the INEEL is to ensure the safety of the public, emergency response workers and the environment.
- State agencies have provided local emergency responders with necessary training and coordination to ensure their safety and that of the public during the transportation of the foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel shipments through California. More than 1,000 emergency responders have been trained.
- Although the Wilson Administration is opposed to California being used as the West Coast port of entry for the shipments of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel, the state is coordinating with DOE to ensure that the transportation takes place in the safest, most expeditious manner possible.
- There have been more than 2,500 shipments of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel in the United States since the 1950's without any release of radioactive material. Eight California state agencies are cooperating with the U.S. Department of Energy, the Federal Railroad Administration, and other federal agencies as well as the railroad carrier to ensure continued public safety during shipments from California to Idaho.
- These shipments will be transported in casks made of stainless steel and lead. Each cask weighs about 26 tons and is certified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. According to DOE, these casks are designed to withstand drops (equivalent to 70 mph vehicle crash), exposure to fire (1475 degrees F for 30 minutes), and immersion in 50 feet of water.

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## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Media inquiries related to the state's roles and responsibilities shall be handled by the appropriate state agency. In the pre-shipment stage, the California Energy Commission acts as coordinating lead. Once shipments begin, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services will act as coordinating lead for inquiries regarding the state's role.

Questions regarding Governor Wilson's official policy on the shipments will be handled by the California Energy Commission in conjunction with his office.

Inquiries related to federal government involvement and its role should be referred to the U.S. Department of Energy.

### **Federal Agencies and Agents**

- **U.S. Department of Energy (DOE):** DOE will maintain responsibility for the FRRSNF shipments at all times. DOE designated points-of-contact will speak on their behalf. All media inquiries specific to route selection, the Atoms for Peace program, licensing of the shipping cask, and spent nuclear fuel in general will be forwarded to DOE's points-of-contact, **John Belluardo at DOE's Oakland office at 510-637-1811 or Bob Alcock at DOE Headquarters at 202-586-5450.**
- **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT):** information related to the regulation of hazardous materials transportation oversight of general rail transportation, and the their role in this particular shipping campaign. **Contact: David Bolger - 202-632-3124 (Federal Railroad Administration).**
- **Concord Naval Weapons Station:** information related to the terminal's capabilities for unloading the foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel transport packages from ships and loading them onto rail cars. **Contact: Karl Yocum - 510-246-5732, Michael Huenergardt - 925-246-5591.**
- **U.S. Coast Guard:** Information related to the regulation of shipments entering U.S. territorial waters, special circumstances surrounding hazardous materials or safeguarded shipments, and the agency's role in these shipments. **Contact: Lt. Richard Teubner - 510-437-3073.**
- **Union Pacific Railroad:** Information related to their operations and procedures during transit of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel. **Contact: Michael Furtney - 415-541-7030.**

**NAC International** (foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel shipping agent): **Refer questions to DOE.**

### **California State Agencies**

- **California Energy Commission:** coordinates policy for state agency working groups on transport of FRRSNF shipments; acts as liaison to Federal Department of Energy and the Western Governors' Association. **Contact: Barbara Byron - 916-654-4976, Dan Nix - 916-654-4861, Claudia Chandler - 916-654-4989.**

- **California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES):** coordinates state and local emergency response preparation, including training, equipping, and exercises as well as managing the statewide radiological emergency response system and emergency public information. **Contact: Tom Mullins - 916-262-1843, Jaime Arteaga - 916-262-1843, Susie Wong - 916-262-1843, Kathy Bailey - 510-286-0895.**
- **California Highway Patrol (CHP):** designates routes for highway radioactive material shipments. CHP is the Governor's designee for advance notice of radioactive materials shipments and acts as State Incident Commander for highway hazardous materials accidents. **Contact: Margaret Magner - 916-657-7202, Bill Brown - 916-657-7279.**
- **California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC):** CPUC is charged with railroad safety oversight. The CPUC Rail Safety Branch staff is federally certified and will cooperate with the Federal Railroad Administration in conducting detailed inspections of rail routes identified for the FRRSNF shipments including track, equipment, signal and train control, railroad operating practices and compliance with state and federal hazardous materials and other applicable safety regulations. **Contact: Diane Dienstein - 415-703-2423, Armando Rendon - 415-703-2423, Paul King - 415-703-3261.**
- **California Department of Health Services (DHS):** DHS has responsibility for public health emergency response to all accidents involving radioactive materials in California. DHS will provide radiological assessment and, in the event of an accident, emergency incident resources. CHP is providing DHS with assistance in shadowing the train from Martinez to the Nevada state border. **Contact: Scott Lewis - 916-323-1471, Ken August - 916-657-3064.**
- **California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG):** CDFG is the State Incident Commander for off-highway hazardous materials incidents as well as the lead agency for responding to hazardous materials incidents in all state waters and waterways. **Contact: Dana Michaels - 916-327-9948, Jack Edwards - 916-653-7664, Patrick Foy - 916-358-2938.**
- **California Department of Transportation (Caltrans):** Caltrans assists in traffic management, the mitigation of highway accidents, and coordinates the transportation permit program for oversize / overweight trucks. **Contact: Jim Drago - 916-654-4677, Michael Peterson - 916-654-6723.**
- **California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), Department of Toxic Substances Control:** CalEPA is responsible for organizing and coordinating the Railroad Accident Prevention and Immediate Deployment (RAPID) Force. The RAPID Force is comprised of several CalEPA departments and other state agencies which provide assistance following railroad or surface transportation hazardous materials incidents with respect to human health effects, environmental fate, laboratory analysis, cleanup technologies and public information. The RAPID Force is a component of the Incident Command System. **Contact: Ron Baker - 916-324-3142**
- **Western Governors Association (WGA):** WGA will provide coordination of information between state jurisdictions and will respond to inquiries directly related to WGA's role in this particular shipment.

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## INFORMATION REQUESTS

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### **Requests from Legislators and other local Officials**

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' and California Energy Commission's Legislative Liaison will coordinate with other state legislative liaison personnel on making appropriate state legislative notifications, and on responding to requests from legislative staff and elected officials for additional information. OES regional personnel will work with local government representatives to ensure all pertinent local personnel are informed and up-to-date on the FRRSNF shipments. **Contacts: Nicole Mahrt, OES - 916-464-1074, Tracy Stevens, CEC - 916-654-4942.**

### **Public Information and Media Response:**

California agencies and participating local governments will respond promptly to public and media inquires regarding their specific involvement with the foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel shipments (see Roles and Responsibilities). State agencies will develop appropriate materials, such as fact sheets, for distribution to the public and the news media.

OES will coordinate with operational areas through OES regional operations.

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## PRIOR TO SHIPMENT

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State agencies involved in the transportation of foreign research reactor spent nuclear fuel through California will coordinate information and participate in planning and preparedness efforts relative to public information needs.

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## DURING OFF-LOADING AT CONCORD NAVAL WEAPONS STATION

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All involved state agencies will have public information officers available to respond to inquiries from the news media or to report to joint information centers as needed.

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## DURING SHIPMENT

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OES will send representative(s) to the DOE/Contra Costa County joint information center at the Martinez Emergency Operations Center. OES will activate the emergency news center (ENC) at OES Headquarters in Sacramento and staff it at appropriate levels to respond to inquiries from the news media and the public. Other state agencies will dispatch public information officers to the ENC as appropriate. Rumor control will also be a function of the ENC as appropriate.

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## COMPLETION OF SHIPMENT

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Upon arriving at INEEL, DOE coordinates and issues a news release announcing the conclusion of the shipment as soon as possible considering the safeguard status of the shipment. Within six weeks of conclusion of the shipment, DOE will coordinate with California state agencies involved in the transportation of FRRSNF shipments on producing an after action report summarizing lessons learned and suggestions for the next shipments and distribute reports appropriately.