



BILL RICHARDSON  
GOVERNOR

State of New Mexico  
**ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**

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ENTERED



RON CURRY  
SECRETARY

DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

June 15, 2005

Dr. Inés Triay, Acting Manager  
Carlsbad Field Office  
Department of Energy  
P.O. Box 3090  
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-3090

Mr. Richard Raaz, President  
Washington TRU Solutions LLC  
P.O. Box 2078  
Carlsbad, New Mexico 88221-5608

**RE: QUALITY OF WIPP WASTE CHARACTERIZATION AUDIT REPORTS**

Dear Dr. Triay and Mr. Raaz:

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) has become aware of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) Permittees' concerns about language appearing in eighteen letters issued by NMED since December 2002 regarding audit reports submitted for review and approval. The language stated, in relevant part, "NMED's review indicated that the Audit Report showed less attention to detail than presented in previous Audit Reports and, unless remedied, this less rigorous approach to preparation could result in significant deficiencies in future Audit Reports." NMED acknowledges that this "boiler plate" language could be interpreted to suggest that the overall quality of audit reports has been continuously declining. This was never NMED's intent, as evidenced by the over fifty audit letters issued by NMED since March 2000 that have not included such language.

NMED recognizes the integrity and professionalism of the Permittees' audit staff in performing these waste characterization audits, and the diligence they demonstrate in preparing audit reports for NMED review and approval. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (505) 428-2512.

Sincerely,

James P. Bearzi  
Chief  
Hazardous Waste Bureau

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