

of the waste can be transported, but all technical issues must be resolved before the nation's entire inventory of waste can eventually be transported. As DOE continues its research and analysis of transporting SNF and HLW, it may find additional technical issues to address. Careful prioritization of the issues will be needed, including the development of prioritization criteria and agreement from affected government agencies, such as the NRC, and affected local, state, and tribal organizations.

Finding 1. The Board finds that many interrelated technical and integration issues must be addressed in preparing for a nationwide effort to transport SNF and HLW to their eventual destination. The technical issues must be prioritized and their resolution properly sequenced to ensure that the overall program will be operationally feasible and unhindered by delays.

Recommendation 1. As DOE continues analyses and research for a nationwide waste management and transportation system, the Board recommends that DOE ensure the issues in Table 2-1 of [the Board's report] [1] are addressed. The Board also recommends that the issues in Table 2-1 and any other issues identified by DOE be prioritized and carefully sequenced to support the integrated operation of a nationwide transportation program.

2. DOE evaluations of storage sites for nuclear waste should continue.

The Board commends DOE for proactive efforts to inspect and evaluate the readiness to remove commercial SNF from nuclear power plant sites where all reactors have been shut down but where commercial SNF remains in dry storage. To support the full integration of a transportation program for SNF and HLW, similar evaluations will need to be conducted at all nuclear power plant sites as well as DOE sites storing DOE-managed SNF and HLW.

Finding 2. The Board finds that DOE's effort to evaluate the readiness to move commercial SNF from shutdown nuclear power plant sites has gathered important information that will be needed to support the removal of commercial SNF from these sites for transportation. However, not all shutdown sites have been fully evaluated. Furthermore, DOE has not conducted similar reviews at DOE facilities that store DOE-managed SNF and HLW.¹

Recommendation 2. The Board recommends that DOE give higher priority to evaluating the removal of commercial SNF from shutdown nuclear power plant sites and to evaluating DOE sites that store DOE-managed SNF and HLW. DOE should also share the results of the evaluations with operators of waste storage sites, so they can apply lessons learned, retain critical site transportation infrastructure, and be better prepared for the eventual transportation of the wastes.²

3. Advance planning for the development of casks and canisters for SNF and HLW is needed. [Note that in this context, "develop" means to complete design, safety documentation, testing, NRC approval, fabrication, and implementation.]

To implement an integrated, nationwide waste management program, DOE will need to complete the testing, licensing, and fabrication of existing canister designs (e.g., the DOE standardized canister) and develop new canister designs for some

1 In Finding No. 2 and Recommendation No. 2, the Board is addressing DOE effort to evaluate waste storage sites to gain valuable information about the condition of the wastes and the condition of transportation infrastructure. It is not intended, nor should it be implied, that the Board is commenting on the preferred shipping queue for removing SNF or HLW from the waste storage sites.

2 It should be noted that the Board's recommendations are directed to DOE for action. It is not intended, nor should it be implied, that the Board's recommendations are directed to commercial nuclear utilities for action.

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