

November 18, 2014

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq
Minister of the Environment
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington St, 28th Floor
Gatineau QC K1A 0H3

Mr. Michael Binder
President,
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
PO Box 1046, Station B, 280 Slater St
Ottawa ON K1P5S9

**Subject: Deep Geologic Repository for Low and Intermediate Level
Radioactive Waste Project**

Dear Minister Aglukkaq and President Binder:

As Chair of the Joint Review Panel responsible for the review of the Deep Geologic Repository for Low and Intermediate Level Radioactive Waste (DGR) project, I am writing today to inform you that the Panel has closed the record for the review. The Panel has determined that the information that it requires to complete its mandate has been obtained and made available on the public registry. The Panel is now proceeding with the preparation of its environmental assessment report.

Since its establishment in January of 2012, the Joint Review Panel has received over 1900 submissions and technical reports and held a public orientation session, three public technical information sessions and a total of 33 public hearing days in the project area. During the public hearing, the Panel heard 223 oral presentations from First Nations and Métis peoples, members of the public and federal, provincial and municipal government representatives. The pre-hearing sessions and hearing days are reflected in over 10,300 pages of written transcripts. The record of information for the DGR review is extensive and includes numerous significant, complex and technical documents.

As you know, the Minister of the Environment and the President of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission signed a Joint Review Panel Agreement for the Deep Geologic Repository project in January 2009. The Agreement was amended in August 2012 to reflect the coming into force of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act 2012* (CEAA 2012) on July 6, 2012. In accordance with those amendments, the timeline for the Panel to submit its report is 515 days (17 months) from the coming into force of CEAA 2012, not including the time taken by the proponent to respond to information requests from the Panel.

I note that Part II of the Terms of Reference in the original Agreement direct the Joint Review Panel to deliver its report to the Minister of the Environment within 90 days of the close of the record and that no modification was made to Part II through the amended Agreement. The Joint Review Panel, however, has determined that it is not feasible for it to produce a detailed report that addresses the many complex and important matters necessary within this 90-day timeframe. The Panel assures you that it will meet the 515-day report submission timeline identified in the 2012 amended Agreement and will submit its report on time and no later than May 6, 2015. The Panel is certain that this timeline will ensure a thorough presentation of its assessment of the information received and a report that meets all of the requirements of CEAA 2012.

Accordingly, the Joint Review Panel requests your concurrence with this timeline for the submission of its report. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

<original signed by>

Stella Swanson
Chair, Deep Geologic Repository Joint Review Panel

c.c.: James F. Archibald, Joint Review Panel Member
Gunter Muecke, Joint Review Panel Member

Ron Hallman, President, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency