

DOE Request for Information on Private Initiatives to Develop Consolidated Interim Storage Facilities

PURPOSE

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) requests information regarding private initiatives (PI) for making consolidated interim storage facility (ISF) services available to DOE for spent nuclear fuel (SNF) storage, whether a pilot-scale or larger-scale facility. DOE believes that potential host/neighboring communities, potential ISF operators and existing nuclear waste facility operators, among others, may be interested in responding to this RFI.

BACKGROUND

In 2010, the Secretary of Energy chartered the Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) on America's Nuclear Future to conduct a comprehensive review and recommend a plan of action for the management and disposal of the nation's used nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. In January of 2012, the BRC issued a Report to the Secretary of Energy, which included a number of recommendations. In January 2013, the Administration released its Strategy for the Management and Disposal of Used Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste, which serves as a statement of Administration policy regarding the importance of addressing the disposition of used nuclear fuel (also referred to as spent nuclear fuel) and high-level radioactive waste; lays out the overall design of an integrated system to address the issue; outlines the reforms needed to implement such a system; and represents the Administration's response to the BRC recommendations. This Strategy includes the siting, licensing, constructing and operating of facilities for consolidated interim storage.

Consistent with the Strategy, the Department is planning an integrated waste management system to transport, store, and dispose of our nation's spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. Such an integrated waste management system would include facilities and other key infrastructure needed to safely manage spent nuclear fuel from commercial electricity generation. The Department envisions an integrated waste management system that may include (among other elements): pilot interim storage facilities, initially focused on accepting spent nuclear fuel from shutdown reactor sites; and full-scale, consolidated interim storage facilities that provide greater capacity and flexibility within the waste management system.

The Department is aware that PIs to develop interim storage facilities, that could provide the Department with spent nuclear fuel interim storage services, are in various stages of development. Although not envisioned in the Administration's Strategy, PIs represent a potentially promising alternative that can be used either solely or in addition to federal facilities

for consolidated interim storage. We therefore are issuing this RFI to seek input on key questions related to the role PIs could play in an integrated waste management system.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

DOE seeks information on PIs for a consolidated ISF, whether pilot-scale or larger-scale, as an alternative or in addition to federal facilities sited using a consent based siting process. In particular, DOE seeks information in the following areas (all questions do not need to be addressed by prospective respondents):

1. What key factors should be considered to ensure that PIs, as part of the overall integrated nuclear waste management system, would provide a workable solution for interim storage of spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste?
2. How could a PI benefit:
 - a. the local community and state or Tribe in which an ISF is sited?
 - b. neighboring communities?
3. What type of involvement if any should the Department or other federal agency consider having with the PI and the community regarding organizational, structural, and contractual frameworks and why?
4. What are the benefits and drawbacks of a PI, compared to a federally-financed capital project resulting in a government-owned contractor-operated (GOCO) interim storage facility?
5. What assurances to the Government do you think would be appropriate, to ensure that SNF stored at a private ISF, would be managed effectively so as to contain costs to the Government?
6. What possibilities are there with respect to business models for a PI, and what are the benefits and disadvantages of those models?
7. How could a PI manage liabilities that might arise during the storage period?
8. What state/local/tribal authorizations/approvals would be needed?
9. How can the Government continue to explore or implement the PI concept in a fair, open and transparent manner going forward?

10. What, if any, supporting agreements might be expected between the Government and the host state/tribe/local community associated with a PI?
11. What other considerations should be taken into account?
12. Are there any alternative approaches to developing non-federally-owned facilities that might be proposed (e.g. how projects would be financed, anticipated regulatory and legal issues, etc.). If so, what are they, are there proposed solution, and how would the above questions be answered with respect to such approaches?

RESPONSE PREPARATION AND TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Responses to this RFI are due by January 27, 2017, shall be sent by email to the mailbox *PrivateISF@hq.doe.gov* and shall include the subject line “Response to RFI on Private Initiatives to Develop Consolidated SNF Storage Facilities”. The responses shall be in Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, or Portable Data Format (PDF) readable by Adobe Acrobat software and should be limited to approximately 15 pages.

DOE intends to make the responses submitted to this RFI publicly available in their entirety. Therefore, DOE recommends that respondents do not include any business sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise privileged information (Confidential Business Data or CBI), or any personally identifiable information (PII) such as personal email or phone numbers, in their submission. Responses to this RFI will be automatically posted and made publicly available; DOE will not review submissions for any CBI or PII so it is the respondents’ responsibility to ensure no such information is submitted.

If a respondent would like to respond with information that contains potential CBI or PII, they may do so by submitting responses to *PrivateISF_Sensitive@hq.doe.gov*. Responses are subject to disclosure statutes such as the Freedom of Information Act. As such, the respondent should clearly identify any CBI or PII and indicate the rationale why such information should not be released. For further details on DOE’s treatment of potential CBI that is subject to a FOIA request, see 10 CFR 1004.11 and 5 U.S.C. 552 (b) (4).

Respondents may be provided the opportunity to make a presentation (no longer than 90 minutes in duration including question & answer time) regarding their submitted response at DOE Headquarters, at DOE’s discretion. Respondents desiring to make an on-site presentation are asked to make their request known with their submittal to this RFI. Presentations are likely to be conducted during early 2017. Respondents who wish to make a presentation at DOE Headquarters should prepare a presentation package of no more than 20 slides, and provide 15 hardcopies to session participants at the presentation (if a presentation is elected). An electronic version (PDF) of the briefing shall be sent by email to the POC one day prior to the presentation.

Any files transmitted in response to this RFI which contain a virus will not be opened.

POINT OF CONTACT

The Point of Contact (POC) for this RFI is Mr. Andrew Griffith, DOE Office of Nuclear Energy.

Questions concerning this RFI may be emailed to *PrivateISF@hq.doe.gov*. Please include in the subject line “Question on RFI on Private Initiatives to Develop Consolidated SNF Storage Facilities”.

This RFI does not obligate the U.S. Government to any future procurement. Responses that are received will not be returned, and will be disposed of after reviews of the responses are completed. DOE has no current procurement or acquisition requirement, and information received will not be used to award contracts. DOE will not reimburse or otherwise compensate for any costs associated with the submission of information. DOE will utilize information received from this RFI to assist in planning efforts for an integrated waste management system.

Thank you in advance for your input, and we look forward to receiving your response.