



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200
Washington, DC 20555-0001 E-mail: opa@nrc.gov
Web Site: www.nrc.gov

No. 02-144

December 12, 2002

CHAIRMAN MESERVE TO LEAVE NRC IN SPRING

Chairman Richard A. Meserve, who has held his post at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for more than three years, announced today that he has accepted the Presidency of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, effective next spring. He will remain at the NRC through March of next year.

"This was a difficult decision for me," Dr. Meserve said, in announcing his decision to the staff. "I have very much enjoyed my service at the NRC, including in particular the opportunity to work with all of you. I believe that the NRC is the most capable and effective agency in Government...with a staff that stands out in its dedication and competence."

In his statement to the staff, a copy of which is attached, he cited a number of things accomplished during his tenure, including effectively responding to the escalated threat of terrorism since the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

Chairman Meserve joined the NRC in October 1999. His term of office was to have expired on June 30, 2004.

###

December 12, 2002

**STATEMENT OF R.A. MESERVE
TO THE NRC STAFF**

Good morning.

This is Chairman Meserve. I apologize for interrupting your work, but I want to spend a moment to reflect on the challenges we have confronted together and on the changes that are before us.

I have had the good fortune to serve as the Chairman of the NRC for over three years. Let me remind you of a few of the things we have jointly accomplished:

- We have responded effectively to the terrorists' challenge to our national security.
- We have facilitated the continued contribution of safe nuclear power to meeting our Nation's energy needs through careful regulatory oversight, through license renewal, and through power uprates.
- We have prepared for the next generation of nuclear reactors. In this connection, we have reinvigorated the role of research in laying the foundation for the deployment of advanced nuclear technologies.
- We have made significant progress in establishing risk-informed regulation through the successful implementation of the reactor oversight process and through various regulatory changes.
- We have put in place the framework to deal with an application for a license to dispose of high-level waste at Yucca Mountain.
- We have made a strong start on revising the framework for the control of nuclear materials.
- We have advanced our utilization of information technology, thereby enhancing public access to agency information.

- We have become very actively engaged in a variety of international activities of significance to our Nation.
- And we have made significant progress in dealing with human capital issues through aggressive efforts at recruitment and retention of skilled staff.

Underlying all of these activities, and the many more that I could list, is our fundamental commitment to the paramount mission of the NRC -- safety. You should have pride, as I do, in all that we have accomplished.

- 2 -

I have had occasion to reflect on these matters because I have been asked to assume the Presidency of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. As you may know, the Carnegie Institution undertakes scientific research in a wide variety of areas -- areas ranging from genetics and high-pressure physics, to plant biology and the large-scale structure of the universe. I have been on the board of the Carnegie Institution for about 10 years and know it well. It is an exceptional organization. As a result, I have concluded that this is an opportunity that I can not decline. Although the Carnegie Institution would like me to start at the turn of year, I have indicated that I plan to remain at the NRC until the end of March in order to allow an orderly transition in the NRC's management. I will thus be leaving the NRC a little more than a year before my term would normally expire.

This was a difficult decision for me. I have very much enjoyed my service at the NRC, including in particular the opportunity to work with all of you. I believe that the NRC is the most capable and effective agency in Government. This is because the NRC is blessed with a staff that stands out in its dedication and competence. It has been an honor for me to serve with you and I look forward to continuing our work together for the next several months. I know that I leave you in good hands with my skilled and accomplished colleagues on the Commission.

I hope that you have a pleasant holiday season. And again, thank you for all of your support.