

October 8, 1998

SECY 98-234

For: The Commissioners
From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 2, 1998

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*No input this week.

/RA/

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Catawba Nuclear Station Units 1 and 2

On September 30, 1998, the staff issued license amendments which replace the Catawba technical specifications in their entirety with new technical specifications based on the improved Standard Technical Specifications (STS). These are the 33rd and 34th units that have been approved to convert to the improved STS. The licensee will implement these revised technical specifications by January 31, 1999. Issuance of these amendments completes an item in the Commission Tasking Memorandum.

McGuire Nuclear Station Units 1 and 2

On September 30, 1998, the staff issued license amendments which replace the McGuire technical specifications in their entirety with new technical specifications based on the improved Standard Technical Specifications (STS). These are the 35th and 36th units that have been approved to convert to the improved STS. The licensee will implement these revised technical specifications within 90 days. Issuance of these amendments completes an item in the Commission Tasking Memorandum.

Nine Mile Point Unit 1

On September 24, 1998, the NRC staff held a meeting at State University of New York at Oswego regarding the licensee's request that the NRC consent to extending the current core shroud vertical weld inspection interval from 10,600 hours of hot operation to 14,500 hours. The extension would provide for completion of a normal 24-month operating cycle before performing the inspection. NRC participants included PDI-1, EMCB, SRXB, RI, and an NRC consultant. Approximately 75 members of the public and local officials attended the meeting.

The meeting consisted of two sessions. The first session, an open meeting between the NRC staff and licensee, discussed technical aspects of the request, including details of the core shroud boat sample tests and evaluations, shroud fluence measurement results, and technical justifications for applying a slower crack growth rate to the Unit 1 shroud. The first session began at 5:00 p.m. and ended at 7:00 p.m.

During the second session, the NRC staff received comments and statements from the public and local officials regarding the request. The comments and statements predominately reflected opposition to extending the inspection schedule because direct observation is perceived to provide higher confidence than reliance upon engineering calculations. The NRC staff responded to comments during the meeting and noted that the comments would be considered by the NRC staff during its continuing review. The staff identified November 1 as the target date for the NRC's response to the licensee's request, which if approved, would extend the inspection from the end of November 1998 to early April 1999. The second session began at 7:30 p.m. and ended at 12:10 a.m.

Status of Tasking Memorandum Item IV.G

Item IV.G of the EDO's tasking memorandum of August 25, 1998, described staff efforts to ensure that staff guidance on the use of Confirmatory Action Letters (CALs) is appropriate and that the staff exercises appropriate discipline in the development and issuance of CALs.

By memorandum to the Acting Associate Director, ADPR, dated September 30, 1998, the staff documented completion of Milestones 1 and 2 of item IV.G.

Milestone 1 called for a review of existing CALs against the current guidance of the enforcement manual. Since there are only seven existing CALs issued to operating reactors, the staff expanded the scope of this milestone to include approximately 18 CALs. This sample included all existing CALs and the most recently issued CALs from each of the regional offices. The staff review concluded that, with one exception, all CALs met the guidance of the enforcement manual. The exception was in 1994 when a CAL was used rather than enforcement discretion. However, this latter action occurred prior to the revisions to part 9900 of the inspection manual that provides guidance for issuing enforcement discretion.

Milestone 2 called for a reinforcement of management expectations regarding the use of CALs to ADPR and Regional management. By memorandum from the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation to the Associate Director, ADPR, and the Regional Administrators, dated September 24, 1998, these expectations were issued. In addition, this memorandum stated that all future CALs will be reviewed by the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, prior to issuance.

Milestone 3 calls for a review/issuance of revised guidance documents to ensure the existence of clear criteria for consistent decision making. Finally, Milestone 4 calls for a reinforcement of expectations regarding any revised guidance on the use of CALS to ADPR and Regional management. Milestones 3 and 4 are both due by the end of November 1998.

Arkansas Nuclear One Units 1 And 2

On September 28, 1998, a confirmatory Order was issued to Entergy Operations, Inc., to revise the requirements for ANO-1 and ANO-2 for establishing indication of hydrogen concentration in the containment following an accident. Orders dated March 14, 1983, required the licensee to implement and maintain its commitments pertaining to the requirement in NUREG-0737, "Clarification of TMI Action Plan Requirements," that indication of hydrogen concentrations be available within 30 minutes of the initiation of safety injection. As part of an initiative undertaken by the NRC and the Nuclear Energy Institute to improve the incorporation of risk-informed and performance-based insights into the regulation of nuclear power plants, the licensee submitted a request on March 2, 1998, to revise the 30-minute requirement for hydrogen monitoring to 90 minutes. Two similar requests had been made in the early 1990's and had been denied by the NRR staff. The technical basis for the request was that the actions necessary to establish the hydrogen indication are a distraction for control room operators from more important tasks during the initial attempts to respond to an event and that information provided by the monitors is not used until later stages of responding to an accident. By a letter dated July 22, 1998, the staff had informed the licensee that a license amendment would be necessary to revise the timing requirement for hydrogen monitoring. The staff subsequently decided to issue an Order to allow

a more timely response to the request and to address the issue by a more generic approach. This completes tasking memorandum item I.C.8.

Entergy Operations Inc.

On Friday, September 25, 1998, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) filed a §2.206 petition requesting the NRC to order River Bend Station (RBS), Unit No. 1 to shut down. This request was in response to River Bend's notification on September 21, 1998, whereby the licensee has identified "...a possible defect in fuel cladding." The potential cladding defect was identified as a result of increased radiation levels monitored by the offgas pretreatment radiation monitor.

The UCS petition asserts that the design and licensing basis does not permit operation with failed fuel assemblies, and that RBS must be "immediately shut down" and remain shut down until:

- (1) RBS removes the failed fuel assemblies from the reactor core, or;
- (2) RBS updates its design and licensing basis to permit the plant to operate with known fuel damage.

This petition is related to a recent UCS report entitled "Potential Nuclear Safety Hazard/ Reactor Operation with Failed Fuel Cladding", dated April 2, 1998. In addition, this most recent UCS petition appears to raise similar issues relating to a §2.206 petition associated with Vermont Yankee.

Implementation of ASME Section XI

On September 16 and 17, 1998, representatives from DE participated in an industry workshop sponsored by EPRI on the implementation of ASME Section XI Subsections IWE and IWL. A final rule which became effective on September 9, 1996, required licensees to develop a containment ISI program according to Section XI and implement it within 5 years. Twenty-four utilities have requested EPRI to develop a guideline document for the containment inspection program. For this workshop, EPRI requested NRC participation on a panel to discuss issues relative to the requirements contained in 10 CFR 50.55a.

The final draft of EPRI's program guide has been published. It will be revised in the spring after feedback has been received from the lead implementation plants [Davis-Besse (steel containment); Calvert Cliffs 1 & 2 (Post-tensioned concrete containment); Brunswick 1 & 2 (Mark I)]. The EPRI program guide is intended to provide utilities with a uniform approach to containment inspection, including the areas where relief request might be appropriate, which incorporates the Section XI, Appendix J, and the protective coatings programs (integrating the provisions of ANSI N101.4, RG 1.54, IN 97-13, GL 98-04, etc.) into one set of inspection procedures.

Some of the notable items are: (1) several vendors have been contacted by the licensees with regard to improving the ability to examine remote and inaccessible areas of containments; (2) a submittal has already been received by the staff to use the 1998 Edition for Subsections IWE and IWL as an alternative to the 1992 Edition with the 1992 Addenda as presently required by §

50.55a; at least 12 other utilities have expressed interest; and (3) there was confusion regarding several requirements in § 50.55a. In the staff's opinion, in some areas [e.g., applicability of IWL-7000 (Replacement) as part of the rule, tying Integrated Structural Testing with inspections of post-tensioning tendons and concrete], the draft EPRI guidance was not consistent with the intent of the regulation. These items were discussed during the Panel Discussion. The NRC participants had clearly stated the disclaimer about their opinions. EPRI has agreed to correct the existing guideline to reflect the NRC participants' concerns. The draft EPRI guideline is subjected to a peer review prior to its widespread use.

Proposed Change to Maintenance Rule Noticed

The proposed change to the maintenance rule that would require licensees to perform safety assessments prior to removing equipment from service for maintenance was published in the Federal Register on September 30, 1998. The public will have 75 days to comment. The proposed rule package is displayed on the maintenance rule home page at (case sensitive) www.nrc.gov/NRR/mrule/sec98165.htm. It is the SECY-98-165 package, which is followed by the SRM on the same subject.

Risk Evaluation of Accumulator AOT Extension (WCAP-15049)

The Probabilistic Safety Assessment Branch (SPSB) completed its risk evaluation of the Westinghouse topical report (WCAP-15049) that requested an accumulator allowed-outage time (AOT) extension from one hour to 24 hours. The risk input was provided to Reactor Systems Branch (SRXB) on September 25, 1998. We found that Westinghouse performed a comprehensive risk analysis to support the proposed change. The quality of the risk analysis was reasonable and generally conservative. We found that the impact on risk would be small due to the change, and that the results met the intent of the guidances in the applicable risk-informed regulatory guides - RG 1.174 and 1.177. The current AOT of one hour for an inoperable accumulator could potentially introduce unnecessary plant risk associated with a forced plant shutdown and ensuing startup. The averted risk associated with avoiding forced transition could be significant in comparison with the risk impact due to the proposed change. Therefore, the staff concluded that the risk analysis supported the AOT extension.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Nuclear Energy Institute 10 CFR Part 70 Meeting

On September 29, 1998, staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards and the Office of the General Counsel met with representatives from licensees and the Nuclear Energy Institute to discuss the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's proposed revision to 10 CFR Part 70. The meeting was productive and suggestions were made for follow-up meetings on specific topics and other actions to clarify staff and licensee positions. Some details need to be addressed during these future meetings to arrive at a common understanding of how to go forward with the rulemaking and guidance.

Inspector Accompaniment Visit to Russia

During the week of September 21-25, 1998, staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, supported by inspectors from Regions I and II, accompanied Russian inspectors from the regulatory agency Gosatomnadzor (GAN) on a physical protection inspection of the Beloyarsk Nuclear Power Plant in Yekaterinberg, Russia. Earlier in the year, GAN inspectors accompanied the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) inspectors during routine inspections and specialized performance evaluations at NRC-licensed facilities. The objective of inspector accompaniments is to demonstrate NRC inspection methodologies to GAN personnel and familiarize NRC with GAN inspection methodologies. Information obtained from these accompaniments is used in directing future NRC assistance activities for regulatory development.

Eastman Kodak Company License Renewal

On September 30, 1998, Special Nuclear Material License, SNM-1513, for the Eastman Kodak Company (EKC), Rochester, New York, was renewed for a 10-year term. The license authorized EKC to use uranium-235 in a Californium Neutron Flux Multiplier (CFX). The CFX is a subcritical assembly with the licensed material in the form of uranium-aluminum alloy fuel plates clad in aluminum. EKC uses the CFX for neutron activation analysis for research and development activities.

Approval of Reclamation Plan for Grace Energy Sites in New Mexico

Staff from the Division of Waste Management (DWM) completed the review of a reclamation plan for three uranium extraction sites in New Mexico, licensed to Michael P. Grace, II. In December 1993, the staff ordered Mr. Grace to complete reclamation of the sites. However, in April 1995, Mr. Grace died without completing any work. The sites are being reclaimed by his estate. A reclamation plan was submitted by the lawyers representing the Grace Estate on July 3, 1998. The plan proposed to remove byproduct materials from the three sites (a total of about 800 cubic yards) and ship the material to Quivira Mining Company's uranium mill and tailings site near Grants, New Mexico, for disposal. Subsequent to a radiological survey to verify cleanup, the sites will be recontoured and planted with native grasses. DWM staff performed an Environmental Assessment of the proposed reclamation activities, and issued a Finding of No

Significant Impact in the Federal Register on September 14, 1998. An amendment to the license accepting the reclamation plan, with minor modifications, was issued on September 23, 1998. The reclamation contractor plans to complete reclamation activities in October 1998. A completion report will be prepared and submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and if site reclamation is determined to meet regulatory requirements, the license will be terminated and the sites released for unrestricted use.

Bankruptcy of Atlas

On September 22, 1998, Atlas Corporation filed, with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Colorado, a petition for relief under Chapter 11 of Title 11 of the U.S. Code, 11 U.S.C. Sections 101 et seq. Atlas holds Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Source Material License No. SUA-917 for its former uranium mill facility near Moab, Utah. NRC staff is currently in the process of assessing Atlas' proposal to reclaim the uranium mill tailings in place. Atlas stated that it intends to continue its responsibilities with respect to its NRC license. On October 1, 1998, staff from the Division of Waste Management (DWM) met with Atlas Corporation to discuss its bankruptcy filing and the Atlas plan to still reclaim the Moab, Utah tailings. Essentially, Atlas informed DWM that it had sufficient assets to reclaim the tailings. These included: (1) on-hand cash; (2) property at the Moab site that could be sold; (3) Colorado River rights; and (4) payments from the Department of Energy for the federal governments portion of the tailings reclamation costs. In addition, Atlas presented information on how it is working with a company that insures reclamation cleanup costs. Through this arrangement, Atlas would obtain insurance to cover any additional costs over the current \$19 million cost estimate for on-site reclamation. This additional guarantee of funds would ensure that on-site reclamation could be completed. Atlas also informed DWM that in order to ensure that the bankruptcy was not moved from Chapter 11 (reorganization of Atlas) to Chapter 7 (liquidation of Atlas), Atlas would need the NRC Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) by December 1998. Atlas indicated that either the Board of Creditors for the bankruptcy or the Judge could move to have the bankruptcy treated as Chapter 7. DWM's current schedule was to complete the FEIS by March 1999. DWM committed to review the situation, and determine what could be done to accelerate the schedule. The U.S. attorney located in Denver participated in the call, and has committed to support NRC in the bankruptcy proceeding.

Licensing of Ambrosia Lake Uranium Mill

On September 25, 1998, staff from the Division of Waste Management (DWM) licensed the Department of Energy (DOE) as the long-term custodian for the Ambrosia Lake, New Mexico, mill. With the licensing of this site, DWM has completed all its obligations for Fiscal Year 1998 as required by Title I of the Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act. Two DOE sites remain to be licensed. DOE anticipates having these sites ready for licensing in the first quarter of Calendar Year 1999. When the two remaining sites are licensed, the DOE Title I program for reclaiming abandoned uranium mills will be complete. DOE will continue its program to restore and monitor contaminated groundwater at the sites over the next couple of decades.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Meeting With SKI, Sweden on Environmental Qualification

RES/DET staff met with the officials of SKI in Stockholm, Sweden in September 1998 to discuss technical issues related to environmental qualification of electrical cables. The meeting attendees included utility representatives, manufacturers and consultants. Sweden has recently completed extended thermal aging at high temperature and LOCA testing of electrical components, including I&C cables. The chlorosulphonated polyethylene (CSPE-Hypalon) insulation materials (included in jacket material of Rockbestos cables used in the nuclear power plants in the United States) showed very pronounced mechanical degradation. The results also show that the cables which were subjected to intermittent vibration during the thermal aging indicated significantly lower insulation resistance, higher capacitance and higher dielectric loss factor during LOCA as compared to cables which were subjected to the same thermal aging without vibration. This is an interesting observation, which will be reviewed in depth by the NRC staff. The staff would review implications of degradation of these electrical properties on I&C cables and their capability to perform their intended safety function(s). Further, the RES/DET staff will raise this issue with IEEE and the nuclear industry.

The differences in qualification requirements in Sweden and the United States were discussed during the meeting. Swedish regulations identify three categories of electrical equipment (Class 1E, Class 2E, and balance-of-plant). Note that the consensus was not reached in the United States to accept the concept of Class 2E.

It was concluded that a cooperative agreement between SKI and NRC would be beneficial for both countries in the area of environmental qualification.

A portion of the trip included a visit to the Oskarshamn Nuclear Power Plant, near Kalmar, Sweden. An extensive modernization program, including replacement of cables, is being undertaken by the utility. The possibility of supplying naturally aged cables to United States for additional testing was discussed. SKI supports such cooperation. RES/DET staff will continue to pursue the close contacts with SKI and will pursue initiation of a cooperative program on environmental qualification under the bilateral NRC/SKI Cooperative Agreement.

Clearance Model Validation Studies at the Stüdsvik Facility

The staffs of RES, DOE, and EPA met with the Swedish Radiation Protection Institute and their consultant on September 23, 1998 to discuss a proposal to conduct clearance model validation studies at the Stüdsvik facility. These studies would be designed to provide actual measurements of radioactive concentrations and doses to individuals for comparison with the modeled predictions. Thus, the results could be used in the validation of the models developed by NRC to support the clearance rulemaking. Sweden clears metals with less than 500 Bq/kg β/γ activity and less than 100 Bq/kg α activity. They propose to study the background radiation levels of metals in general commerce, the partitioning of radionuclides in melting processes, and the external doses to workers. Representatives of the respective U.S. agencies are to assess

their respective validation needs in terms of work that could be done at Stüdsvik and reconvene on October 15, 1998, to evaluate the feasibility of the design and funding of any studies.

Japanese Inquire About MARSSIM and Have Assessed Doses From Clearance

Japanese representatives of the government (Radioactive Waste Management Center) and industry (Toshiba Corporation, and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd.) met with staff from RES and NMSS on September 28, 1998, to gain a better understanding of the Multi-Agency Radiation Survey and Site Investigation Manual (MARSSIM). MARSSIM describes the methods, processes, and decision tools with which licensees can conduct a final status survey for release of lands and structures. It is a technically robust guidance manual acceptable to NRC, EPA, DOE and DOD. Discussions included the status of MARSSIM in the regulatory structure, and the timing and kinds of inspections in the final survey, and the clearance of concrete, metals, and equipment. The Japanese indicated that, in anticipation of the resolution of comments on the interim clearance values in IAEA TECDOC-855, they performed dose assessment analysis for clearance, and their results generally agreed with the categorization of clearance levels in IAEA TECDOC-855. NRC staff has requested detailed information on the analyses from the Japanese to compare with the NRC analyses.

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Rulemaking to Modify Reactor Event Reporting Requirements

In response to public comments on the advance notice of proposed rulemaking, an additional public meeting ("tabletop exercise") has been scheduled for November 13, 1998. The purpose is to test key aspects of the contemplated amendments to 10 CFR 50.72 and 50.73 for clarity and consistency, early in the process of drafting them, by discussing how reportability decisions could be made for example events. This will provide insights to be used in completing the draft requirements and guidance. It will add about 5 weeks to the overall rulemaking schedule.

Region II Tabletop Exercise

AEOD staff assisted Region II in conducting and participating in a fuel cycle facility tabletop exercise in the region on Wednesday, September 30, 1998. One staff member assisted at the regional office while others participated by video conference along with members of NMSS fuel cycle safety management and staff. The purpose of the Tabletop was to exercise the way in which Headquarters and the region would interact and respond to an event at a fuel cycle facility. It involved discussing recently developed procedures for the region which include early contact and coordination with EPA. EPA may have a significant role in assisting the NRC in hazardous materials response at an NRC licensed facility where chemicals are involved.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS

1. PNO-II-98-042A, Florida Power & Light Co. (Turkey Point 3 4), UPDATE ON HURRICANE GEORGES
2. PNO-II-98-042B, Florida Power & Light Co. (Turkey Point 3 4), UPDATE ON HURRICANE GEORGES
3. PNO-IV-98-044, Equillon Enterprises, DAMAGED FIXED GUAGING DEVICE CONTAINING CESIUM-137
4. PNO-IV-98-045, Entergy Operations, Inc. (Waterford 3), PREPARATION FOR HURRICANE GEORGES
5. PNO-IV-98-046, Materials Testing & Inspection, Inc., UNSECURED TROXLER MOISTURE/DENSITY GAUGES (Event Number 34843)

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Garage Repair Project

The OWFN garage repair project remains on schedule to complete the repairs to the entrance drive aisle and reopen the OWFN garage entrance on Monday, October 5, 1998. Parking attendants will return to their operations inside the garage and normal traffic patterns for the garage entrance and exit will resume. The remainder of the work for this phase on the P-2 and P-3 levels will be completed in two weeks. The additional security officers will remain in the garage on these levels to assist with traffic control.

Contract Awards

Contract No. NRC-26-98-266 a commercial-item contract was awarded to Scientech, Inc. on September 30, 1998, for work entitled, "A Real Time Plant Risk Software Package and Associated Training." Under this contract, the contractor shall furnish the latest revisions of a real time plant risk software package and associated deliverables for use by the NRC/TTC in training and regulatory activities. The period of performance is one year with four one-year options. The total amount for the one-year base period is \$31,200.00. Should all four options be exercised, the total amount of this contract will be \$231,200.00. The following streamlining initiatives were applied: combined synopsis/solicitation, electronic transmittal of the SOW, deadline set for proposers' questions, simplified evaluation criteria/past performance, electronic coordination of the Competitive Range and Final Evaluation Reports.

Rulemaking Activities for the Week Ending October 2, 1998 Monitoring the Effectiveness of Maintenance at Nuclear Power Plants (Part 50)

A proposed rule that would amend power reactor safety regulations concerning maintenance at nuclear plants was published in the Federal Register on September 30, 1998 (63 FR 52201). The proposed regulation would require that licensees assess the cumulative effect of out-of-service equipment on the plant's capability to perform safety functions before beginning any maintenance activity on structures, systems, or components within the scope of the maintenance rule. The comment period for this proposed rule closes December 14, 1998.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of
September 25, 1998 - October 2, 1998:

Nuclear sources related to the FR-25 Pipeline System in the Ohio townships of Coal, Washington, Richland, Jackson, Benton, and Laurel. (FOIA/PA-98-358)

Nuclear sources related to the 501, 601, or 701 Pipeline System of the FR-25 Pipeline in the Ohio townships of Aid, Symmes, Greenfield, Good Hope, Berne, and Laurel. (FOIA/PA-98-359)

Reactor operators, active license listing by facility. (FOIA/PA-98-360)

Office of Investigations series 1811, Criminal Investigator, employee classifications and classification reviews by other agencies. (FOIA/PA-98-361)

Cask design clarification for use at Private Fuel Storage Facility, letter dated 8/3/98. (FOIA/PA-98-362)

Florida Power & Light, index of Central File records since 1975. (FOIA/PA-98-363)

Eastern Technologies, Inc., correspondence with NRC since FOIA-97-295, and any new license request for a nuclear laundry since 9/1/97. (FOIA/PA-98-364)

Office of Human Resources
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending October 2, 1998

Arrivals		
PEARSON, James	TRAN & STOR SFTY INSPECTOR	NMSS
Retirements		
ANG, William	SR HEALTH PHYSICIST	RIV
CHANEY, Dean	FUEL FAC/DECOMM INSP	RIV
CONORT, Euanice	OFC AUTOMATION ASSISTANT	RII
HORNER Jack	HEALTH PHYSICIST	RIV
HUNT, Jeanne	PROGRAM ASSISTANT	OI
KIRSCH, Dennis	BRANCH CHIEF	RIV
KUNIHIRO, Dean	REG STATE LIAISON OFFICER	RIV
PEREIRA, Dave	REACTOR INSPECTOR	RIV
RICE, Meredith	SR MAIL CLERK	ADM
SMITH, Maurine	SECRETARY (OA)	RIV
WENSLAWSKI, Frank	BRANCH CHIEF	RIV
Departures		
NYSTROM, Diane	SECRETARY (OA)	RIII
OLSON, Brad	REACTOR INSPECTOR	RIV
PRANGE, Beth	SR HEALTH PHYSICIST	RIV
SMITH, Simon	REACTOR ENGINEER	RES
SMITH, Wanda	SECRETARY (OA)	RIV
THORN, Julien	OFC AUTOMATION CLERK	OCFO

Office of State Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Management Review Board Meeting

At a September 28, 1998 Management Review Board (MRB) meeting, the in-depth follow-up Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP) review, conducted in July 1998, determined that the New Mexico program had vastly improved in all program areas. In the 1997 IMPEP review, the New Mexico program had been found Adequate But Needs Improvement and Compatible with NRC's program. Because of the significance of the concerns identified in 1997, New Mexico was placed on heightened oversight. At the September 1998 meeting, the MRB commended New Mexico for their progress and efforts to improve their program since the 1997 review. The MRB agreed with the review team that all common and non-common indicators were satisfactory and found the New Mexico program adequate to protect public health and safety and compatible with NRC's program. The MRB directed that the heightened oversight be discontinued and that the next New Mexico IMPEP review be conducted in three years.

Office of Public Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending October 2, 1998

Media Interest

There was extensive media coverage in New Jersey on the final SALP report on Salem.

There was a fair amount of press interest on the public exit meeting regarding the Point Beach cask loading.

Local press in California covered the vent stack disassembly at Humboldt Bay.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
98-175	NRC Recommends Extension, Modification of Price-Anderson Act to Continue Public Liability Coverage (revision)
98-176	NRC Proposes Revisions to its Regulations for Making Changes to Licensed Facilities
98-177	NRC Proposes to Require Nuclear Power Plants to Assess Safety Impact Before Taking Equipment out of Service for Maintenance
98-178	NRC Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste Reschedules October Meeting in Nevada
Regions:	
I-98-111	NRC, Companies to Discuss Decommissioning Work at Pa. Reactor
I-98-112	NRC Sets Public Meeting on Indian Point 1 Decommissioning
I-98-113	NRC Regional Administrator to Hold Press Conference in Waterford
II-98-57	NRC Official to Hold News Conference In Atlanta on October 5 to Brief Area Reporters on Agency's Regulatory Functions
III-98-50	NRC Inspection Team to Present Findings on Welding, Loading of Spent Fuel Cask at Point Beach Nuclear Plant
III-98-51	NRC Staff Denies License Renewal for Cleveland, Ohio, Firm
IV-9-37	NRC Monitors Preparation for Hurricane Georges

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Bangladesh AEC Chairman Briefing on Nuclear Power Interest

Dr. M. A. Wazed Miah, Chairman of the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC), visited the Department of State on Thursday, October 1, to brief the Department on R&D activities being pursued by the BAEC; progress on the Bangladesh Cabinet Committee's decision to implement a nuclear power project as a build-operate-own, build-operate-transfer or joint venture undertaking; and development of a regulatory infrastructure for nuclear safety and radiation control matters. Staff representatives from DOE and NRC attended the briefing. Among the planning assumptions for the Bangladesh power project are a nominal 600 MW power level and a provision for the return of all spent fuel to the supplier country.

Office of the Secretary
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending October 2, 1998

Documents Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SRM on SECY-98-171	9/25/98	Proposed Rulemaking on 10 CFR Parts 50, 52, and 72 Requirements Concerning Changes, Tests and Experiments and Staff Recommendations on Changes to Other Regulations and Enforcement Policy
Commission Voting Record on 98-171	9/25/98	(same)
2. SECY-98-215	9/15/98	Request by Arkansas to Relinquish Authority for Sealed Source and Device Evaluation and Approval
SRM on 98-215	9/28/98	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-215	9/28/98	(same)
3. COMNJD-97-003	6/3/97	Reevaluation of the Role of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS)
SRM on 97-003	6/30/97	(same)
4. COMSECY-98-016	7/13/98	Federal Register Notice on Potassium Iodide
SRM on COMSECY-98-016	9/30/98	(same)
Chairman Jackson's Vote on COMSECY-98-016	7/21/98	(same)
Cmr. Diaz' vote on COMSECY-98-016	7/21/98	(same)
Cmr. McGaffigan's vote on COMSECY-98-016	9/16/98	(same)

Information Papers		
1. SECY-98-211	9/11/98	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending September 4, 1998
2. SECY-98-218	9/21/98	Suspension of the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance Program
Memoranda		
1. M980915A	9/28/98	Staff Requirements - Briefing by Reactor Vendors Owners Groups, Tuesday, September 15, 1998
2. M980903A/B	10/1/98	Staff Requirements - All Employees Meeting, Thursday, September 3, 1998

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Robert L. Cudlin, Indus International, Inc., dated September 19, 1998, concerns an article, "Lost Generation - The Risk of Regulatory Shutdown Poses Significant Asset Management Challenges for Nuclear Plants" (Incoming dated August 25, 1998 also released).

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. 10 CFR Part 50; Preliminary Criterion on the Use of Non-Owner Operating Companies.

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Salem Units 1 and 2

On Wednesday, September 30, 1998, senior NRC Regional management visited the Salem site to conduct a public meeting, tour the facility, and conduct interviews with selected licensee personnel and management. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the NRC's Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) for Salem station for the period of March 1, 1997 through August 1, 1998. This was the last SALP management meeting conducted in Region I prior to suspension of the SALP process.

Beaver Valley Unit 2

Beaver Valley Unit 2 is commencing power escalation to 100% power after a nine-month maintenance outage. The reactor was taken critical at 0903 and entered Mode 1 at 1216 on September 26. The licensee completed final synchronization to the grid at 1425 on September 29. The current licensee's schedule projects the unit will reach 100% power on October 1.

Beaver Valley Unit 2 shut down on December 16, 1997 due to inability to meet single- failure criteria for the control room emergency ventilation system. The unit remained shut down to address problems with technical specification surveillance compliance and containment isolation check valve binding.

Haddam Neck Transitioning to Decommissioning Facility

During September, several changes were inspected by NRC staff that Connecticut Yankee considered key transitions from a permanently shut down nuclear facility to that of a decommissioning facility. The defueled security plan and emergency preparedness (EP) plan for Haddam Neck (HN) were approved by NRC in September. On September 23, three inspectors, including one NRR staff member, observed HN's first defueled EP exercise that demonstrated an adequate implementation of the defueled EP plan. The facility also completed construction tie-in and performance testing of the B-train of the Intermediate Cooling Loop and Spray Cooling Systems for Spent Fuel Pool (SFP) cooling. Completion of the A-train is expected next week. Once turnover is completed, the new SFP cooling system will be completely independent of the Service Water System. Also, on September 29, the Senior Resident Inspector discussed with the local advisory group that effective January 15, 1999, NRC would no longer maintain an onsite resident inspector at HN. Inspections will be performed as necessary by Region I staff.

Licensing Practices and Procedures Course

Region I provided Betsy Ullrich and Pam Henderson as instructors for the Technical Training Center's presentation of the Licensing Practices and Procedures Course. The course was conducted from September 28 through October 2, 1998, in Pittsburgh, PA, at the State of Pennsylvania, Department of Environmental Protection Offices. Ms. Ullrich covered the "Overview of Licensing" introduction to the course on September 28 and Ms. Henderson covered

"Medical Licensing" on September 29. Attendees from the course included representatives from NRC Agreement States, Department of the Air Force, and the Veterans Administration.

October 2, 1998

ENCLOSURE P

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

BWX Technologies

On October 1, BWX Technologies management met, via videoconference, with the Regional Administrator, NMSS management, and staff to discuss their plans and schedule for the downblending of uranium from high enriched to low enriched. The licensee also discussed equipment additions and modifications planned to support the increases throughout.

Carolina Power and Light Company - Brunswick; Differing Professional View

A Differing Professional View (DPV) was expressed by a Region II staff member regarding the disposition of a violation, at the Brunswick facility, involving the adequacy of response time testing. The issue had been dispositioned following several conference calls between Region II, NRR, and OE as a non-cited violation. The differing professional view expressed by the staff member was that the NRC should not have given Carolina Power and Light Company credit for identification, nor for prompt corrective action.

A DPV Panel including members from Region II and OE was convened in accordance with Management Directive 10.159. The DPV Panel concluded that 1) the identification and corrective action credit was appropriate and consistent with agency policy, and 2) that the docketed information did not indicate a repetitive violation.

Duke Energy Corporation - Oconee

On September 29, 1998, Region II and NRR personnel conducted the fourth bimonthly Management Oversight Group (MOG) meeting with the licensee for the Oconee Nuclear Station. The meeting, conducted at the site, consisted of a review of activities relating to licensee's progress in implementing the recovery plan as well as preparation for the upcoming refueling outage.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 2, 1998

Union Electric Company Visit

On October 2, 1998, the Union Electric Company Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer, and the Manager, Callaway Plant, met with the Regional Administrator and the Director, Division of Reactor Projects to discuss general performance at the Callaway Plant.

Washington Nuclear Plant-2 Personnel Change

On October 9, 1998, Mr. Paul Bemis, Vice President Nuclear Operations will resign. In the interim until a replacement can be selected, Mr. Vic Parrish, Chief Executive Officer, will perform the duties of the Vice President Nuclear Operations.

Planned Reorganization at South Texas Project

STP Nuclear Operating Company (STPNOC) has implemented the first step in a major realignment intended to reorganize the site from the five existing functional areas (Generation, Engineering, Nuclear Assurance and Licensing, Plant Services, and the Site Business Unit) to three primary functional areas (Generation, Business Services, and Engineering and Technical Services).

Joe Sheppard will relieve Ted Cloninger, current head of the Engineering and Technical Services function, at the end of the refueling outage. Ted Cloninger will relieve John Groth, current head of Generation, no later than June 30, 1999. John Groth will remain as a special assistant to the President, STPNOC, until the end of 1999 at which time he will retire. The second step is the combining of Plant Services and the Site Business Unit into the Business Services function by January 30, 1999. Florence K. Mangan, current Vice President, Plant Services, will assume direction of the Business Services function at that time.

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending October 2, 1998

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 31					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Madden	10/06/98 366 DSOB	9:30	Vote	Confirmation of DOE Ass't Secretary for Environment, Safety & Health and DOE Deputy Secretary	Senators Murkowski/Bumpers Energy and Natural Resources
Gerke	10/06/98 342 DSOB	10:30	Sylvia Mathews	Confirmation Hearing as Deputy Director, OMB	Senators Thompson/Glenn Governmental Affairs
Combs/ Callahan	10/08/98 2322 RHOB	9:30	TBA	Hanford Radioactive Waste Privatization Contract	Reps. Barton/Klink Oversight and Investigations Commerce