

INFORMATION REPORT

March 27, 2003

SECY-03-0046

For: The Commissioners
From: John W. Craig, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: SECY-03-0046 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK
ENDING MARCH 21, 2003

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*No input this week.

/RA/

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

NRC Regulatory Issue Summary 2003-05, Issuance of Orders Imposing Additional Physical Protection Measures For Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installations Using Dry Storage dated March 19, 2003

The NRC is issuing this regulatory issue summary to inform addressees of the issuance of Orders to selected licensees requiring implementation of interim compensatory measures concerning the physical protection of Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installations using dry storage. These physical protection measures are intended to supplement the current physical protection requirements of 10 CFR 72, Subpart H.

Order EA-03-009, Interim Inspection Requirements for Reactor Pressure Vessel Heads at PWRs

On February 11, 2003, the NRC issued Orders establishing interim inspection requirements for reactor pressure vessel heads at pressurized water reactors (PWRs). The inspection requirements were based on effective degradation years, and categorized licensees based on their susceptibility to degradation via primary water stress corrosion cracking. The Orders required licensees within 20 days of the date of the Orders to respond to the NRC. Licensees proposing to deviate from the requirements of the Order were to seek relaxation using the procedure specified in the Orders.

The NRC has received all of the 20-day responses from the licensees. In reviewing the responses, 28 out of 69 PWRs have indicated that they will be seeking some sort of relaxation. Many of the licensees, who consented to the Order, noted in their responses that if conditions occurred while performing the actual inspections which require some relief, they would be submitting relaxation requests. The majority of the relaxations noted in the responses dealt with performing inspections to the bottom of the penetration nozzle or performing the inspections 2 inches above the J-groove weld.

Differing Professional View (DPV) Related to Control Room Manning at Zion Nuclear Power Station

A DPV panel was convened in response to a DPV that had been submitted concerning a license amendment request from the Zion Nuclear Power Station, which would eliminate the requirement to staff the control room with at least one qualified individual at all times when nuclear fuel was stored in the spent fuel pool.

The DPV panel issued its report on January 17, 2003. The ad hoc panel concluded that approval of the amendment request would not reduce the level of plant safety. The panel acknowledged that the DPV submitter raised a valid concern regarding inconsistencies in the approach staff has employed in the past. Staff will review previously approved amendment requests and review criteria to reduce/eliminate inconsistencies in the future.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board Members and Staff Visit the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses

On March 13, 2003, four members and two staff of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (NWTRB) visited the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (hereafter, the Center). The Division of Waste Management was represented during the visit. The purpose of the NWTRB's visit to the Center was to: (a) provide new board members with an overview of the Center's role in NRC's High-Level Waste program; (b) discuss corrosion processes and near-field environment issues associated with the potential geologic repository at Yucca Mountain; and (c) tour three Center laboratories where such research is conducted. Information presented to, and discussed with, the NWTRB, was limited to information that is currently publicly available.

Staff Participates in Low-Level Radioactive Waste Forum Meeting

On March 17-18, 2003, staff from the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards participated in the meeting of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Forum in Austin, Texas. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange information on developments in radioactive waste management and disposal in the U.S. Attendees included, in addition to the States and Compacts involved in low-level waste (LLW) disposal, representatives from disposal facility operators; the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the Department of Energy; the Army Corps of Engineers; the Department of Defense; and the Nuclear Energy Institute. Topics discussed included: (a) the recent court decision concerning the Nebraska LLW disposal facility program; (b) legislation recently passed in the State of California regarding radioactive waste; (c) EPA's proposed rulemaking on mixed and low-activity waste; (d) activities of the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors; (e) a recent study on the impacts of a jet crash at a nuclear facility; (f) the status of the NRC staff's assured-isolation rulemaking plan; (g) emergency preparedness issues related to the recent Witt report; (h) the status of the rulemaking on disposition of radioactive waste; and (i) a status report on the licensing of Private Fuel Storage.

Staff Participates in Fuel Cycle Facility Forum Meeting

On March 11-12, 2003, staff of the Division of Waste Management participated in a Fuel Cycle Facility Forum (FCFF) meeting in Denver, Colorado. The FCFF is a consortium of licensees whose purpose is to provide a forum for addressing technical and regulatory issues that will impact decommissioning of material sites and facilities. The FCFF represents a broad range of source and special nuclear material licensees, including many who are actively involved in the remediation and/or decommissioning of portions of their sites. During the meeting, the staff presented an overview of NRC's clearance efforts, decommissioning guidance consolidation, and the proposed decommissioning financial assurance rulemaking. The staff also participated in a joint FCFF/National Mining Association (NMA) technical "table-top" exercise on surveys and approaches for demonstrating that a site meets NRC's criteria for license termination. In addition to FCFF and NMA, a representative of the Department of Energy's newly established Office of Legacy Sites participated in the meeting.

Package Performance Study Test Protocols Public Workshops

On March 12, 2003, NRC hosted a public workshop on NUREG-1768, "Package Performance Study Test Protocols," in Las Vegas, Nevada. This was the second of three workshops (the first was in Rockville on March 6, 2003, the third was in Chicago on March 19, 2003) during the public comment period on NUREG-1768. The report was discussed by a roundtable of about 20 stakeholder representatives, including county and city governments; the States of Nevada and Utah; Tribal representatives; nuclear and transport industry; the Department of Transportation, the Department of Energy; and public interest groups. Approximately 100 people attended the workshop in the morning, and about 75 in the afternoon. The workshop received significant media attention, including two local-television camera crews and both local major newspapers. Issues focused on: (a) testing all casks for certification; (b) identifying failure points/thresholds; (c) public confidence versus public safety; (d) terrorism; (e) the view that testing should be in Nevada; (f) first responder actions; and (g) testing to failure. The staff emphasized that no decisions about how the tests will be conducted have been made and stated it will consider all comments. The meetings were to obtain comment rather than defend the statements in the protocols. Also, an evening public meeting was held in Pahrump, Nevada, on March 13, 2003. Approximately 35 people attended and asked a broad range of questions on transportation and testing issues.

Meeting with General Electric Company Regarding Design for Transport Cask

On March 18, 2003, the Spent Fuel Project Office met with the General Electric Company (GE) regarding the design of a cask for the transport of several irradiated fuel rods for research testing. The design is based on a currently existing cask, the Model No. FSV-1. The discussion centered on the structural analyses and physical testing that will be performed. Preliminary results of criticality analyses were also presented. GE is planning to submit an application for package approval to NRC in the third quarter of 2003.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Public Workshop on Revisions to Risk-Informed In service Inspection (RI-ISI) Guidance Documents

The staff from the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research and the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation held a public workshop on March 13, 2003, to discuss revisions to NRC Regulatory Guide 1.178, An Approach for Plant-Specific Risk-Informed Decision Making: In service Inspection of Piping, July 1998, and NRC NUREG-0800, Chapter 3.9.8, Standard Review Plan for Trial Use for the Review of Risk-Informed In service Inspection of Piping, May 1998. Due to the nature of the relatively minor revisions, the public workshop was held in lieu of extending the public comment period. The changes primarily updated the guidance documents to incorporate the experience gained from more than 50 RI-ISI relief request reviews.

Public Meeting on Mitigating Systems Performance Index (MSPI) Pilot Program

In a March 19, 2003, public meeting to discuss issues with the MSPI pilot, staff from the Operating Experience Risk Analysis branch (RES/DRAA/OERAB) presented the status and recent findings of the research program. The meeting was attended by approximately thirty participants from the NRC Regions, industry representatives, and licensees.

The purpose of the MSPI is to monitor the performance of six systems based on their ability to perform risk-significant functions. The index, which approximates the change in core damage frequency, is comprised of two elements - system unavailability and system reliability. Plant-specific Probabilistic Risk Assessment (PRA) models will be used to calculate the contribution of component failures and maintenance unavailability to the index.

In the presentation, the staff discussed the status of the independent verification as well as the "Top 5 Technical Issues" associated with the implementation of the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) guidance. Significant insights related to the sensitivity of results to assumptions regarding common-cause failures, updated component failure rate data, and other modeling issues were discussed. Representatives from both the NRC Regions and the industry commented that substantial progress has been made in the two months since the Public Workshop in January of this year.

Presentation on the Industry Trends Program

As part of the periodic public meeting on the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) held March 20, 2002, staff of the Operating Experience Risk Analysis Branch (RES/DRAA/OERAB) and NRR presented a summary of the Industry Trends Program (ITP). In addition to discussing the program itself, the presentation also provided the status of ongoing developments of additional indicators that are more risk-informed and better aligned with the cornerstones of safety in the ROP.

The primary purposes of the ITP are to collect and assess industry performance data; provide feedback to agency programs; and, to provide information to stakeholders on the performance of operating plants. Topics discussed with the attendees included the purposes and objectives of the ITP; current industry performance indicators that are trended and reported to Congress; efforts to trend other indicators, such as the ROP performance indicators; an introduction of staff efforts to develop an integrated initiating event performance indicator; and, development of thresholds for the integrated initiating event indicator.

Nuclear Security and Incident Response
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-IV-03-017, Cardinal Health - LOST IODINE-131 SOURCE.
2. PNO-III-03-012, Cook County Hospital - LOST STRONTIUM-90 EYE APPLICATOR SOURCE.
3. PNO-IV-03-017A, Cardinal Health - LOST IODINE-131 SOURCE - UPDATE.
4. PNO-III-03-013, Palisades Nuclear Power Plant - ALERT DECLARED DUE TO A FIRE WITH THE POTENTIAL TO AFFECT SAFETY SYSTEMS.

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Decommissioning Trust Provisions; Correction (Part 50)

A document that corrects a final rule concerning decommissioning trust provisions for nuclear power plants was published in the Federal Register on March 17, 2003 (68 FR 12571). The final rule requires licensees that are no longer rate-regulated, or that no longer have access to a non-bypassable charge for decommissioning, have decommissioning trust agreements in a form acceptable to the NRC. This document corrects a codification error. The final rule becomes effective December 24, 2003.

Acquisition Training and Certification Program

On March 13, 2003, the Division of Contracts conducted an Acquisition Certification and Training Program module entitled "Overview for Acquisition Program Managers" at the Technical Training Center in Chattanooga, TN. Representatives from the Office of the General Counsel, Division of Facilities and Security, Office of the Inspector General, and the Office of Small Business and Civil Rights participated in this one day course. Course discussions covered the procurement process and regulations, how to identify and resolve conflict of interest (COI) situations, security requirements for Information and Technology (IT) and commercial contracts, prevention of fraud, waste, and abuse in commercial contracting, and small business contracting goals. There were twelve attendees.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FOIA/PA) Requests received during the period of March 14 through March 20, 2003:

Radiological materials/devices, description of all lost, stolen or unaccounted for in Minnesota, 1998 to present (FOIA/PA-2003-0210)

Radioactive sources, stolen or missing from 6-27-02 to present (FOIA/PA-2003-0211)

Radioactive sources, University of South Florida, stolen or missing, last five years (FOIA/PA-2003-0212)

Personal security records submitted 10-15-01, Dresden Nuclear Power Plant (FOIA/PA-2003-0213)

Resident Inspector position, all documents relating to hiring decision (FOIA/PA-2003-0214)

Radiation exposure reports, occupational, regarding named individual (FOIA/PA-2003-0215)

Allegation RIV-96-A-0272, all documents and correspondence between named individual and NRC (FOIA/PA-2003-0216)

FOIA case logs for 1-1-2000 to present (FOIA/PA-2003-0217)

Radiation Control Labs, license application, inspection reports, and all correspondence, 1-2000 to present (FOIA/PA-2003-0218)

Radiation Technologies Inc., Rockaway, NJ, permits, licenses, regulatory inspections, enforcement actions and reports re: releases of hazardous substances (FOIA/PA-2003-0219)

Office of Public Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending March 21, 2003

Media Interest

Media interest focused on tightened security at power plants under Code Orange, including the terrorist threat to Palo Verde. There were numerous press inquiries about who would be the next NRC Chairman. The Princeton/MIT study on vulnerability of spent fuel pools to airborne attack received wide play in the news. End-of-Cycle meetings at various plants received broad local coverage.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
03-031	NRC Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste to Meet March 25-27 in Rockville, Maryland
03-032	NRC Announces New Managerial Appointments
03-033	NRC Renews Licenses for North Anna Power Station, Units 1 and 2, and Surry Power Station, Units 1 and 2, for an Additional 20 Years
Regions:	
I-03-014	NRC to Meet With Exelon to Discuss Annual Performance Assessment of Peach Bottom Nuclear Power Plant
I-03-015	NRC to Meet With Entergy to Discuss Annual Performance Assessment of Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant
I-03-016	NRC Approves Relocation of Emergency Operations Facility for Three Mile Island 1 Nuclear Power Plant
I-03-017	NRC to Discuss Annual Performance Assessment of Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant
II-03-010	NRC to Meet With Progress Energy Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Harris Nuclear Power Plant
II-03-011	NRC to Meet With Southern Nuclear Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Vogtle Nuclear Power Plant
II-03-012	NRC to Meet With Southern Nuclear Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Hatch Nuclear Power Plant
II-03-013	NRC to Meet With Southern Nuclear Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Farley Nuclear Power Plant
II-03-014	NRC to Meet With SCE&G Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Summer Nuclear Power Plant

II-03-016	SNRC to Meet With Progress Energy Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Harris Nuclear Power Plant (New Location for Mtg.)
II-03-017	NRC to Meet With Progress Energy Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Robinson Nuclear Power Plant
III-03-010	NRC Issues Master Materials License to Department of Veterans Affairs for its Medical Facilities Across the Nation
III-03-011	NRC to Meet With Detroit Edison Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Fermi Nuclear Power Plant
III-03-012	NRC to Meet With FirstEnergy Officials to Discuss Safety Performance at Perry Nuclear Power Plant
IV-03-006	NRC to Meet With STP Nuclear Operating Co. to Discuss Performance of South Texas Project
IV-03-007	NRC to Meet With Omaha Public Power District to Discuss Performance of Fort Calhoun Nuclear Power Plant
IV-03-008	NRC to Meet With Union Electric Co. to Discuss Performance of Callaway Nuclear Power Plant
IV-03-009	NRC to Meet With Southern California Edison to Discuss Performance of San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station
IV-03-010	NRC to Meet With Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corp. to Discuss Performance of Wolf Creek

Office of the Secretary
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending March 21, 2003

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SECY-03-0033	3/07/2003	Revised AmerGen's Request to Consolidate the Three Mile Island Unit Emergency Operations Facility (EOF) Into the Combined EOF for Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station (PBAPS) and Limerick Generating Station (LGS)
SRM on SECY-03-0033	3/18/03	(same)
Commission Voting Record on SECY-03-0033	3/18/03	(same)
2. COMSECY-03-0015	3/12/03	January 2003 Update of the Staff's Response to the Chairman's Tasking Memorandum
SRM on COMSECY-03-0015	3/21/03	(same)
Commission Voting Record on COMSECY-03-0015	3/21/03	(same)
3. SECY-02-0225	2/27/02	Proposed Criteria for the Treatment of Individual Requirements in a Regulatory Analysis
SRM on SECY-02-0225	3/21/03	(same)
Commission Voting Record on SECY-02-0225	3/21/03	(same)
Information Papers		
5. SECY-03-0039	3/13/03	SECY-03-0039 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending March 7, 2003
2. SECY-03-0031	3/03/03	Jefferson Proving Ground Decommissioning Status

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Representative Edward J. Markey, dated March 18, 2003, responds to expressed concerns regarding the status of NRC's plan to upgrade security associated with the transportation handling, and storage of radioactive materials.
2. Letter to Representative Edward J. Markey dated March 18, 2003, concerns recent meeting involving the NRC and the Nuclear Energy Institute.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Peer Review Committee for Source Term Modeling -Notice of Meeting
2. Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes - Notice of Meeting.
3. 501st Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards - Notice of Meeting.

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Indian Point

Several NRC staff met during the week of March 17, 2003, with officials from the Indian Point licensee, Entergy Nuclear, the Federal Emergency Agency (FEMA), and others on revised evacuation time estimates related to Indian Point emergency planning. On March 18, 2003, a Region I manager met with Entergy and FEMA at the FEMA offices in New York City to review the estimates prepared by Entergy's contractor. On March 20, 2003, NRC emergency planning specialists from the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation and Region I met with local officials near the plant to discuss the role of evacuation time estimates in emergency planning decision making. Entergy recently provided the time estimates to the local counties for comment.

Heritage Minerals

On March 20, 2003, the Region I Deputy Regional Administrator and Deputy Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, toured the Heritage Minerals site outside Lakehurst, NJ, accompanied by the Region I project lead for the site. The Heritage site is undergoing decommissioning. The site includes two buildings in which sand from the site was wet- and dry-milled to separate heavy minerals such as titanium from the sand. The latter stages of operations resulted in licensable quantities of thorium within the process systems and in a sand pile adjacent to the dry mill. The Region, the Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards, and the Office of Enforcement have been working together to assure that the licensee makes adequate progress toward timely completion of its decommissioning plan.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Spring 2003 Nuclear Nonoperating Owners' Group Conference

On March 19, 2003, the Regional Administrator participated in the Spring 2003 Nuclear Nonoperating Owners' Group Conference in Charleston, SC. Topics discussed included challenges facing the industry and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

Magnet Forum-Professional Day and Development Series at Westlake High School

On March 20, 2003, the Regional Administrator participated in the Magnet Forum-Professional Day and Development Series at Westlake High School in Atlanta, GA. This forum provided an opportunity for the Regional Office to introduce students to the type of work conducted and future job opportunities at the NRC.

U. S. Navy Radiation Safety Committee Meeting

On March 21, 2003, the Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety attended an U. S. Navy Radiation Safety Committee Meeting in Crystal City, VA. This is part of the Regional Office oversight of the Navy Master Materials License.

Equal Employment Opportunity Training Course

On March 18-20, 2003, the course, "Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Training", was presented to managers and staff in the Regional Office. The instructors included the Manager of the Civil Rights Program, NRC Office of Small Business and Civil Rights and representatives from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Annual Assessment Meetings - Reactor Oversight Process

On March 20, 2003, the region held the Reactor Oversight Process Annual Assessment Meeting for the Crystal River nuclear power facility at the licensee's Nuclear Operations Training Facility in Crystal River, FL. A similar meeting was held on the same date for the North Anna nuclear facility at the licensee's Information Center in Mineral, VA.

Participation in Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Working Meeting on Emergency Response

On March 21, 2003, the Region II State and Government Liaison, the Chief of the Plant Support Branch and an agent in the Regional Office of Investigations participated in a meeting between the FBI, Atlanta Division, and representatives from other Federal, State and local government agencies. The purpose was to discuss potential input into standard operating procedures for response to an event involving a radiological dispersal device in the State of Georgia.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 21, 2003

Palo Verde Public End-of-Cycle Meeting

On March 19, 2003, the results of the annual assessment were presented to station management. Meeting attendees included the general public, representatives from the licensee, the local press, state and county officials, and an intervener. NRC efforts to improve security and to improve control of reactor vessel head penetration leaks were presented. Following the presentation, NRC staff responded to questions from the public. An intervener expressed several concerns that NRC is handling through its allegation process. Members of the public were particularly concerned with emergency notifications outside of the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone, and the distribution of potassium iodide.

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending March 21, 2003

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 9

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Combs	03/25/03 SD-192	10:00	OCRW	FY04 Budget	Senators Domenici/Reid Energy & Water Development Appropriations
Portner	04/01/03 TBA	10:00	NRC Chairman	FY04 Budget	Senators Domenici/Reid Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Gerke	Week of 3/31 SD-366	10:00	Markup	Energy Omnibus Draft Legislation	Senators Domenici/Bingaman Energy and Natural Resources
Gerke	4/1-3/03 2123 RHOB	TBA	Markup <i>Tentative</i>	Energy Policy Act of 2003	Reps. Tauzin/Dingell Energy and Commerce