

INFORMATION REPORT

March 9, 2006

SECY-06-0054

For: The Commissioners
From: William M. Dean, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING
MARCH 3, 2006

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*No input this week.

/RA/

William M. Dean
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
L. Rakovan, OEDO

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 3, 2006

NRR/Industry Senior Management Meeting on Materials Degradation Issues

On February 22, 2006, members of NRR senior management met with senior management representatives of the Nuclear Energy Institute, the Electric Power Research Institute, and the Materials Reliability Program (MRP) in a public meeting at NRC Headquarters to discuss materials degradation issues in pressurized water reactor (PWR) facilities. Industry representatives presented details of a reorganization of the MRP made in late 2005 and discussed plans for existing and future materials degradation projects. MRP identified key issues for 2006 that include implementing MRP-139, an industry report on the inspection of Alloy 82/182 butt welds in the primary coolant system of pressurized water reactors (PWRs), completing the PWR Issue Management Tables, and supporting the NRC rulemaking for revised requirements on pressurized thermal shock (10 CFR 50.61). During the meeting, MRP representatives affirmed their willingness to assist in the development of a new code case regarding primary system piping butt-weld inspections, which the NRC requested that ASME develop, including resolution of concerns over access to proprietary information that will be needed to establish the technical basis for the new code case.

Risk Management Technical Specifications Meeting

The staff met with the Nuclear Energy Institute and industry representatives on February 28, 2006, to discuss the Risk Management Guidance (RMG) document for Risk Management Technical Specifications (RMTS) Initiative 4b, Risk-Informed Completion Times. RMTS Initiative 4b will permit licensees to establish risk-based technical specification completion times when equipment is out of service. The use of on-line risk tools is a significant change from the current deterministic license amendment process for these changes. The RMG document is the critical path item for completing the reviews of the pilot plant applications from South Texas Project and Fort Calhoun Station. Pilot plant representatives at the meeting expressed a strong desire to complete this effort this year in order to obtain pilot plant license amendments. Final details are being discussed, such as how to treat probabilistic risk assessment functionality with technical specification inoperability.

Vermont Yankee Public Information Session on License Renewal Review Process

On March 1, 2006, the staff conducted a public information session in Brattleboro, Vermont. The session was conducted following the receipt of the license renewal application for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station to provide information on the license renewal process and opportunities for public involvement.

Issuance of the Draft Safety Evaluation Report (SER) with Open Items Concerning the License Renewal Application for Nine Mile Point, Units 1 and 2

On March 3, 2006, the staff issued the draft SER concerning the license renewal application for Nine Mile Point, Units 1 and 2, which contained one open item and no confirmatory items. A

public meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2006, to discuss the draft SER with the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards.

Regulatory Issue Summary (RIS) 2006-02, "Good Practices for Licensee Performance During the Emergency Preparedness Component of Force-on-force Exercises"

On February 23, 2006, the staff issued the subject RIS which informs licensees of good practices identified based on staff observations of licensees' emergency preparedness performance during force-on-force exercises.

RIS 2006-03, "Guidance on Requesting an Exemption from Biennial Emergency Preparedness Exercise Requirements"

On February 24, 2006, the staff issued the subject RIS which provides guidance to licensees for requesting an exemption from the requirements of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) Part 50, Appendix E, to hold a biennial emergency preparedness exercise.

Vermont Yankee Extended Power Uprate (EPU)

On March 2, 2006, NRC approved a 20 percent extended power uprate (EPU) for Vermont Yankee, which increases its maximum steady state reactor core power level from 1593 megawatts-thermal (MWt) to 1912 MWt. The EPU is subject to a license condition in the areas of minimum critical power ratio, transient testing, and potential adverse flow effects. It is expected that the licensee will soon start to incrementally increase the Vermont Yankee power output and perform the test program necessary to achieve the new power level. This EPU is in response to the licensee's application dated September 10, 2003.

The additional energy requirements for the EPU are met by an increase in bundle enrichment, an increase in the reload batch size, and/or changes in fuel loading pattern to maintain the desired plant operating cycle length. Other changes to support the EPU were made to balance-of-plant equipment, including a new high-pressure turbine, new feedwater heaters and refurbishment of the electrical generator.

Vermont Yankee is the first boiling water reactor (BWR) EPU application to undergo NRC staff review using Review Standard RS-001 and it matches the largest BWR percentage-uprate to date (Clinton also received a 20 percent uprate in 2001). In addition, the staff made presentations on the EPU to the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) sub-committee on November 15 and 16, 2005 (in Vermont) and on November 29 and 30, 2005 (in Rockville), and to the ACRS full-committee on December 7, 2005 (in Rockville). In its letter dated January 4, 2006, the ACRS recommended to the Commission to approve this EPU.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 3, 2006

Haddam Neck License Termination Process

On February 24, 2006, NRC staff approved the second of five anticipated releases of land from the Haddam Neck site license as part of the license termination process. Haddam Neck is located in Meriden, CT. This release included 14 survey units in the outlying areas of the site. The next phase will be submitted for release later this year.

Meeting with USEC Inc. (USEC) on Nuclear Criticality Safety (NCS)

On February 24, 2006, staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards met with USEC to discuss USEC's incorporation of NCS accident sequences in its Integrated Safety Analysis (ISA) Summary for the American Centrifuge Plant (ACP), proposed to be built and operated in Piketon, OH. During the meeting, USEC discussed its revised method for determining the credibility of NCS accident sequences and its draft changes to the ACP's ISA Summary.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 3, 2006

Meeting with Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR) (Pty) Ltd

From February 28 through March 2, 2006, NRC staff met with representatives from the PBMR (Pty) Ltd. to discuss the plant layout and systems of the PBMR reactor design. The purpose of the meeting was to familiarize NRC staff with the PBMR design, in support of future white papers that will be submitted to NRC for pre-application review in May 2006. During the meeting, the NRC staff expressed interest in detailed information on several key systems, such as the fuel handling system. PBMR (Pty) stated that many of the issues brought up by the staff will be addressed during the second set of familiarization sessions on the safety design and analysis and plant operations and events scheduled for March 15-16, 2006.

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Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR)
Items of Interest
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Preliminary Notifications

PNO-I-06-004, Philadelphia Fire Department - IDENTIFICATION OF TROXLER DENSITY GAUGE CONTAINING RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL IN NORTHEAST PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

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Office of Administration (ADM)
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Contract Awards

On February 21, 2006, a competitive contract no. NRC-38-06-383 was awarded to Management Systems, Inc. The contractor shall provide, as needed, current, state-of-the-art training using proven methods to provide NRC staff with the knowledge and skills to effectively evaluate the adequacy of root cause investigations conducted by others. The total estimated cost is \$1,567,010, including all options. The period of performance is five years, including four one-year option periods.

On February 28, 2006, a non-competitive 8(a) contract no. NRC-10-06-396 was awarded to Bankers Business Management Services, Inc. (BBMS). The contractor shall provide NRC Headquarters On-Site Mail Support Services. The total estimated cost is \$1,328,071, including all options. The period of performance is four years and nine months, including four one-year option periods.

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Office of Information Services (OIS)
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Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act Requests Received During the Period of February 24, 2006 through March 2, 2006:

OI case 1-2003-011	FOIA/PA-2006-0124
NRC's FY2007 Information Technology (IT) Budget submission, Exhibit 52, long-term plans, IT-related Exhibit 300s	FOIA/PA-2006-0125
Hiring records & qualifications of named NRC employees relating to license issued to Ecology Service Inc.	FOIA/PA-2006-0126
License 37-30724-01MD, Eisenhower Business Center, 1351 Eisenhower Blvd., Harrisburg, PA 17111, license or documentation of the expiration date of the permit	FOIA/PA-2006-0127
Turkey Point Inspection Report 2005-10, October 7, 2005	FOIA/PA-2006-0128
Work activities of the staff of the Organization Effectiveness Branch, NRR, from January 1, 2005 through July 2, 2005, using criteria described	FOIA/PA-2006-0129

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Office of Human Resources (HR)
 Items of Interest
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Arrival		
ARMIJO, JOSEPH S.	MEMBER	ACRS
DHIR, NEHA S.	CONTRACT MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST	ADM
FULLER, MICHAEL L.	PROJECT MANAGER (WIR)	NMSS
GALLAGHER, DIANE T.	CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OI/R-I
MCCOPPIN, MICHAEL D.	EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SPECIALIST	NSIR
MCHALE, JOHN J.	REACTOR SYSTEMS ENGINEER	NRR
PALOTAY, JOSHUA A.	HEALTH PHYSICIST (NSPDP)	STP
PERKINS, LESLIE T.	PROJECT MANAGER	NRR
STEIN, STEVEN R.	CONSULTANT	NSIR
WEBB, JAMES	HEALTH PHYSICIST	NMSS
Retirements		
SHAW, PEGGY R.	MANAGEMENT ANALYST	R-II
VERNON, DENNIS L.	SENIOR SECURITY SPECIALIST	NSIR
Departures		
CLOYD, TARA M.	SECRETARY (OA)	RES

Office of Public Affairs (OPA)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 3, 2006

Media Interest

The OPA received significant media inquiries on the following:

Vermont Yankee power uprate approval and license renewal application.

Tritium leaks at Exelon plants and Palo Verde.

Oyster Creek license renewal hearing and process.

Design Basis Threat rulemaking.

Millstone whistleblower's security concerns.

Followup on Susquehanna's 3/2 ALERT.

Other Public Affairs Items:

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
06-031	NRC Posts Comments and Responses from the 2005 Emergency Preparedness Public Meeting (3/1)
06-032	NRC Staff Approves Power Uprate for Vermont Yankee (3/2)
06-033	NRC Issues Annual Assessments for Nation's Nuclear Plants (3/3)
Regions:	
I-06-010	NRC Updates Public on License Renewal Process at Vermont Yankee (3/1)
I-06-011	NRC to Hold March 8 th Public Meeting in Plymouth, Mass., on License Renewal Application for Pilgrim Nuclear Plant (3/1)
I-06-012	NRC Tracking 'Alert' at Susquehanna Nuclear Power Plant (3/2)
III-06-006	NRC to Meet with Nuclear Management Co. To Discuss Safety Significance Issue at Prairie Island Plant (2/27)
III-06-007	NRC Issues Draft Environmental Report for Palisades License Renewal, Announces April 5 Public Meeting (3/3)

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Office of the Secretary (SECY)
Items of Interest
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Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Information Papers		
1. SECY-06-0031	02/09/06	Annual Report on Court Litigation (Calendar Year 2005)
2. SECY-06-0032	02/09/06	Semiannual Report on Status of Staff Information Technology/Information Management and Business Process Activities in Preparation for the High-Level Waste Repository Proceedings
Memoranda		
1. M060227	02/27/06	SRM-Affirmation Session: SECY-06-0037 - Hydro Resources, Inc. (P.O. Box 777, Crownpoint, NM 87313) (In Situ Leach Mining Operation)
2. M060215	02/28/06	SRM-Briefing on OCFO Programs, Performance, and Plans
3. M060215 Revised	03/01/06	Revised SRM-Briefing on OCFO Programs, Performance, and Plans
4. M060202B	03/02/06	Briefing on Sensitive Unclassified Non-Safeguards Information (SUNSI) Policy (COMSECY-05-0054)

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Billie Pirner Garde, Clifford & Garde Law Office, dated February 23, 2006, responds to concerns about the position that the nuclear industry continues to take opposition to the NRC staff's attempts to improve NRC oversight of licensee safety culture.
2. Letter to Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr, Governor of Maryland, dated February 20, 2006, requests that a State Liaison Officer to act as the primary liaison to NRC be appointed.
3. Letter to Congressman Joe Barton, dated February 20, 2006, responds to questions regarding preparations the NRC has taken for the review of license applications for new reactors.

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4. Letter to Director General Andre-Claude Lacoste, Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection, dated, February 19, 2006, responds to request for a paper for publication in the ASN's bimonthly journal.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS), Subcommittee Meeting on Thermal-Hydraulic Phenomena, notice of meeting (3/14/06).
2. ACRS, Subcommittee Meeting on Power Uprates, notice of meeting (3/15-16/06).
3. Request for a License to Import Radioactive Waste - Eastern Technologies, Inc.
4. Withdrawal of proposed rule Fire Protection Program - Post-Fire Operator Manual Actions, 10 CFR Part 50, RIN 3150 AH54.
5. Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW), Meeting on Planning and Procedures, notice of meeting (3/24/06).

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Region II (RII)
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Management Meeting with Tennessee Valley Authority

On February 28, 2006, Region II management met with representatives from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to discuss strategic objectives and initiatives of the TVA nuclear organization.

NRC Management Visits Watts Bar Nuclear Plant

On March 3, 2006, regional management, accompanied by the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, visited the Watts Bar Nuclear Plant for a site tour and meeting with licensee management.

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Region III (RIII)
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Community Informational Meeting on Braidwood Tritium Contamination

On February 28, 2006, Region III staff participated in a community informational meeting on the Braidwood groundwater tritium contamination at the Exelon offsite training facility near Braidwood. Also participating were representatives of Exelon Generating Co. and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Emergency Management Agency, Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Will County Health Department. The purpose of the meeting was to answer the public's questions about the tritium contamination from the Braidwood plant and how it affects the safety of drinking water in the area.

Regulatory Conference on Prairie Island Emergency Preparedness Issue

On March 1, 2006, the Region III staff conducted a Regulatory Conference with representatives of Nuclear Management Company to discuss the safety significance of the plant's non-conservative emergency classification process at the Prairie Island Nuclear Power Station. NRC inspectors determined that the Prairie Island staff established a non-conservative emergency classification in the plant's Emergency Plan that, under certain flooding conditions, could result in the plant's failure to declare a Site Area Emergency. The NRC staff has completed a preliminary assessment of the problem and concluded that it is of "low to moderate" safety significance.

Region IV (RIV)
Items of Interest
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Deputy Executive Director for Reactor and Preparedness Programs Visits Palo Verde

On March 2, 2006, the Deputy Executive Director for Reactor and Preparedness Programs visited the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, accompanied by the Regional Administrator. He toured the facility and discussed plant performance and other current issues with the resident staff and licensee management.

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Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA)
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CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 8					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Decker	02/28/06 SD-192	10:00	Michael Chertoff, DHS	FY 2007 Appropriations: Homeland Security	Senators Gregg/Byrd Homeland Security Appropriations
Combs	03/01/06 SD-628	2:30	EPA, DOE, Nuclear Waste Safety Board	Status of Yucca Mountain license application and radiation standards	Senators Inhofe/Jeffords Environment and Public Works
Combs	03/01/06 2212 RHOB	4:30	Linton Brooks-National Nuclear Security Administration, James Rispoli-Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environmental Mgmt	FY 2007 Budget-DOE's Atomic Energy Defense Activities	Reps. Everett/Reyes Strategic Forces Armed Services
Decker	03/02/06 2200 RHOB	2:00	Nonproliferation Policy Education Center, Heritage Foundation	Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty	Reps. Royce/Sherman
Decker	03/02/06 SD-124	2:30	Clay Sell, DOE	Global Nuclear Energy Plan and on the future for nuclear power	Senators Domenici/Reid Energy and Water Appropriations

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CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 8

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Combs	03/07/06 SR-232A	2:45	Linton Brooks-National Nuclear Security Administration, Joseph Rispoli-Assistant Secretary fo Energy for Environmental Mgmt.	FY 2007 Budget - Nuclear Weapons and Environmental Cleanup	Senators Sessions/Nelson Strategic Forces Armed Services
Decker	03/08/06 2362B RHOB	10:00	DOE	Department of Energy-Overview	Reps. Hobson/Visclosky Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Shane	03/09/06 SD-628	9:30	NRC	NRC Oversight	Senators Voinovich/Carper Clean Air, Climate Change, and Nuclear Safety Environment and Public Works
Decker	03/09/06 2362B RHOB	10:00	DOE	Department of Energy- Environmental Management	Reps. Hobson/Visclosky Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Combs	03/14/06 Tentative	TBA	DOE	Status of Yucca Mountain license application	Senators Domenici/Bingaman Energy and Natural Resources
Combs	03/15/06 2362B RHOB	10:00	DOE	Department of Energy - Nuclear Waste Disposal	Reps. Hobson/Visclosky Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Shane	03/16/06 TBD	TBD	TBD	FISMA	Reps. Davis/Waxman Government Reform

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 8

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Combs	03/23/06 Las Vegas, NV	10:00	NRC, GAO, DOE/OCRWM, DOE/IG, Bechtel	Yucca Mountain Project: Persistent Management and Quality Assurance	Reps. Porter/Davis Federal Workforce and Agency Organization Government Reform
Combs	03/28/06 or 03/30/06 TBD	TBD	NRC, GAO, DOE/NNSA, DHS/Customs and Border Protection	GAO findings with regard to counterfeiting an NRC license and general availability of exempt quantity radioactive sources	Senators Coleman/Levin Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Keeling	04/04/06 2247 RHOB	2:00	NRC, GAO, NEI, Exelon, Connecticut Attorney General, POGO	NRC efforts to define the DBT and set protective standards for the Nuclear Power Industry	Reps. Shays/Kucinich National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations Government Reform