

The Honorable Richard B. Cheney
President of the United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. President:

I am forwarding the NRC's "Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences, Fiscal Year 2002." This report on events involving radioactive materials use is required by Section 208 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-438). In the context of the act, an abnormal occurrence (AO) is an unscheduled incident or event that the Commission determines to be significant from the standpoint of public health or safety. The Federal Reports Elimination and Sunset Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-66) requires that AOs be reported to Congress annually.

The report describes five AOs at facilities licensed by the NRC. One event involved the degradation of the reactor head at a nuclear power plant, the second event involved unaccounted for irradiated fuel rods at a nuclear power plant, the third event involved the failure to accurately record the location of two containers of strategic special nuclear material at a fuel cycle facility, the fourth event involved a gamma stereotactic radiosurgery misadministration and the fifth event involved an overexposure of a radiopharmacist at a materials facility. The report also discusses seven events at facilities licensed by Agreement States. One of the Agreement State AOs involved elevated radiation levels from a package during its transport, three events involved radiography overexposures and three events involved medical misadministrations, two therapeutic and one diagnostic. In addition, Appendix C of the AO report titled, "Other Events of Interest," describes two nuclear power reactor events, including a generic event of interest regarding an emerging issue involving reactor vessel head degradation, and four materials events.

Agreement States are the States that have entered into a formal agreement with the NRC pursuant to Section 274 of the Atomic Energy Act (AEA) to regulate certain quantities of AEA licensed material at facilities located within their borders.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Meserve

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