



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa.resource@nrc.gov

Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

No. 11-032

March 1, 2011

OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN GREGORY B. JACZKO AT TODAY'S BRIEFING ON REACTOR MATERIALS AGING MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Good morning. The Commission meets today to discuss very important safety issues related to the materials degradation and aging management for nuclear power plants. With the aging of the nation's nuclear reactors, it is critical that licensees and the agency stay on top of these important issues.

As the 62 approved license renewal applications to date demonstrate, the industry has done good work in developing effective aging management programs. It's important, however, to resist a sense of complacency about these issues, especially as the industry explores the possibility of subsequent license renewal. The agency and its licensees have very limited experience in seeing how aging management programs actually work after the initial 40 year period of operation. In fact, it was less than two years ago that Oyster Creek became the first nuclear power plant to pass the forty year operational mark, and only eight units have entered extended operation at this point.

It's important that we remain proactive in order to address unresolved issues, as well as to identify the questions we need to be asking in order to maintain safety in the future. I believe the NRC, the Department of Energy (DOE), and licensees have done a better job of identifying and analyzing these issues in recent years. The Commission looks forward to hearing from the staff, as well as representatives from the DOE and the industry, on recent progress and future research plans.

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's website.