

# NRC: an Independent Regulatory Agency

**1,040**

Public Meetings

in 2011

**527**

Category 1:  
Observation



**231**

Category 2:  
Feedback



**130**

Category 3:  
Fully Engaged



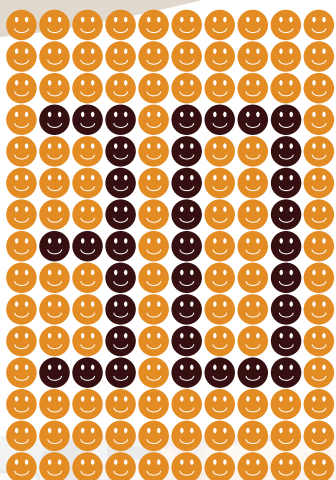
**1** Closed

**151**

Open Meetings  
(ACRS, ASLBP, ACMUT  
Commission Briefings)



**WEBCAST  
MEETINGS**



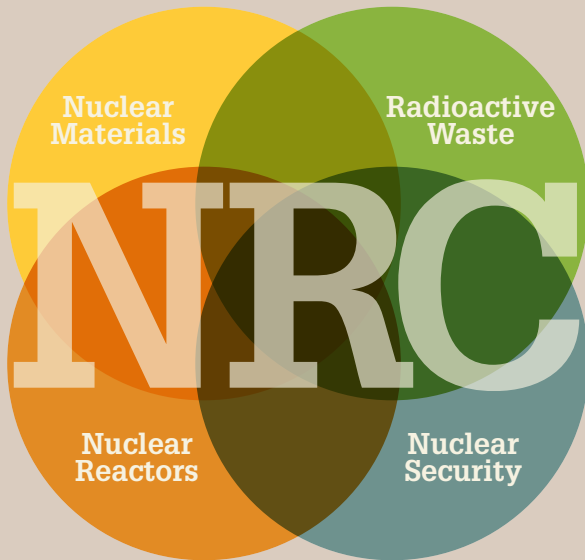
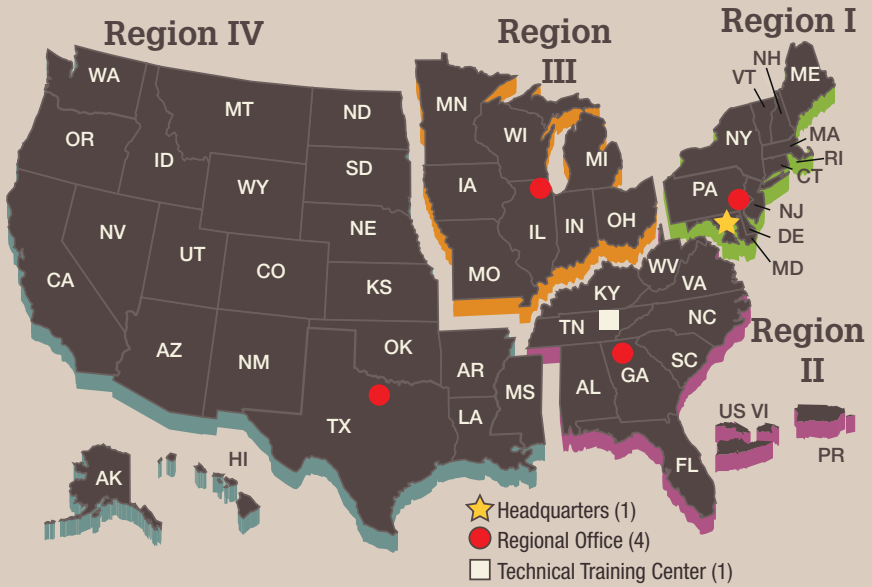
☺ = 20 people

**THE ANNUAL  
REGULATORY  
INFORMATION  
CONFERENCE**

**3,000**

ATTENDEES FROM

**30** DIFFERENT  
COUNTRIES



## Mission

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is an independent agency created by Congress. The mission of the NRC is to license and regulate the Nation's civilian use of byproduct, source, and special nuclear materials to ensure the adequate protection of public health and safety, promote the common defense and security, and protect the environment. The NRC's regulations are designed to protect both the public and workers against radiation hazards from industries that use radioactive materials. The NRC's scope of responsibility includes regulation of commercial nuclear power plants; research, test, and training reactors; nuclear fuel cycle facilities; medical, academic, and industrial uses of radioactive materials; and the transport, storage, and disposal of radioactive materials and wastes. In addition, the NRC licenses the import and export of radioactive materials and works to enhance nuclear safety and security throughout the world.

## Values

The NRC adheres to the principles of good regulation—independence, openness, efficiency, clarity, and reliability. The agency puts these principles into practice with effective, realistic, and timely regulatory actions.

## Strategic Goals

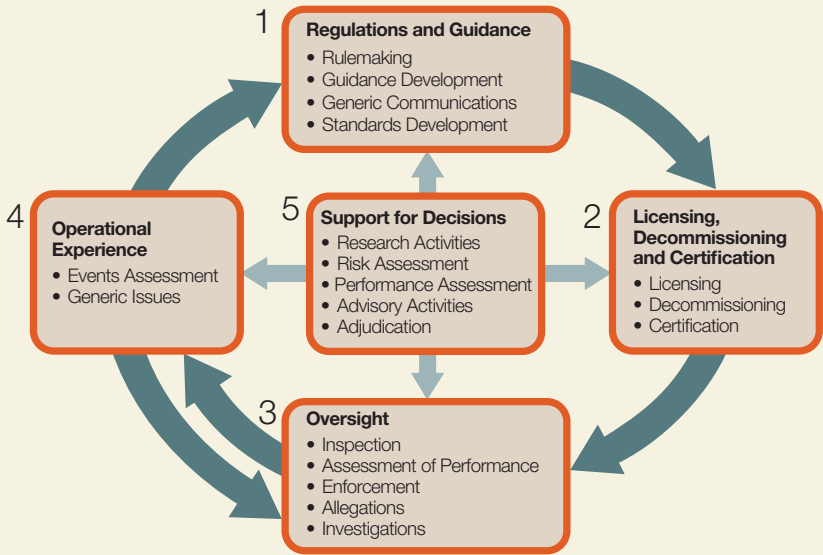
**Safety:** Ensure adequate protection of public health and safety and the environment.

**Security:** Ensure adequate protection in the secure use and management of radioactive materials.

## Strategic Outcomes

- Prevent the occurrence of any nuclear reactor accidents.
- Prevent the occurrence of any inadvertent criticality events.
- Prevent the occurrence of any acute radiation exposures resulting in fatalities.
- Prevent the occurrence of any releases of radioactive materials that result in significant radiation exposures.
- Prevent the occurrence of any releases of radioactive materials that cause significant adverse environmental impacts.
- Prevent any instances where licensed radioactive materials are used domestically in a manner hostile to the United States.
- Prevent unauthorized public disclosures of classified or Safeguards Information through quality measures.

**Figure 1. How We Regulate**



1. Developing regulations and guidance for applicants and licensees.
2. Licensing or certifying applicants to use nuclear materials, operate nuclear facilities, and decommission facilities.
3. Inspecting and assessing licensee operations and facilities to ensure that licensees comply with NRC requirements, investigating allegations of wrongdoing and taking appropriate followup or enforcement actions when necessary.
4. Evaluating operational experience of licensed facilities and activities.
5. Conducting research, holding hearings, and obtaining independent reviews to support regulatory decisions.

## Statutory Authority

The Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 established the NRC to oversee the commercial nuclear industry. The agency took over regulation formerly carried out by the Atomic Energy Commission and began operations on January 18, 1975. As previously noted, the NRC regulates the civilian commercial, industrial, academic, and medical uses of nuclear materials. Effective regulation enables the Nation to use radioactive materials for beneficial civilian purposes while protecting the American people and their environment. The NRC's regulations are contained in Title 10, "Energy," of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR). The following principal statutory authorities govern the NRC's work and can be found on the NRC Web site (see the Web Link Index):

- Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (Pub. L. 83–703)
- Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, as amended (Pub. L. 93–438)
- Uranium Mill Tailings Radiation Control Act of 1978, as amended (Pub. L. 95–604)
- Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 (Pub. L. 95–242)
- West Valley Demonstration Project Act of 1980 (Pub. L. 96–368)
- Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, as amended (Pub. L. 97–425)
- Low-Level Radioactive Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1985 (Pub. L. 99–240)
- Energy Policy Act of 1992 (Pub. L. 102–486)
- Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Pub. L. 109–58)

The NRC, its licensees (those licensed by the NRC to use radioactive materials), and the Agreement States (States that assume regulatory authority over their own use of certain nuclear materials) share a common responsibility to protect public health and safety and the environment. Federal regulations and the NRC regulatory program are important elements in the protection of the public. However, because licensees are the ones using radioactive material, they bear the primary responsibility for safely handling and using these materials.

## Major Activities

The NRC fulfills its responsibilities through the following licensing and regulatory activities:

- licenses the design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of commercial nuclear power plants and other nuclear facilities, such as uranium enrichment facilities, and research and test reactors;
- licenses the possession, use, processing, handling, and importing and exporting of nuclear materials;
- licenses the siting, design, construction, operation, and closure of low-level radioactive waste disposal sites in States under NRC jurisdiction;
- licenses the operators of nuclear reactors;
- inspects licensed and certified facilities and activities;
- certifies gaseous diffusion enrichment facilities and licenses other enrichment facilities;
- conducts light-water reactor safety research, using independent research, data, and expertise, to develop regulations and anticipate potential safety problems;
- collects, analyzes, and disseminates information about the operational safety of commercial nuclear power reactors and certain nonreactor activities;
- issues safety and security regulations, policies, goals, and orders that govern licensed nuclear activities and interacts with other Federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), on safety and security issues;
- investigates nuclear incidents and allegations concerning any matter regulated by the NRC;
- enforces NRC regulations and the conditions of NRC licenses and may impose civil sanctions, including civil penalties, for violations;
- conducts public hearings on matters of nuclear and radiological safety, environmental concern, and common defense and security;
- implements U.S. Government international legal commitments under treaties and conventions;

- develops effective working relationships with State and Tribal governments regarding reactor operations and the regulation of nuclear materials;
- directs the NRC program for response to incidents involving licensees and conducts a program of emergency preparedness and response for licensed nuclear facilities;
- evaluates and acts on the lessons learned from the March 11, 2011, nuclear accident in Japan to ensure that appropriate safety enhancements are implemented at U.S. commercial nuclear facilities;
- provides opportunities for public involvement in the regulatory process that include: holding open meetings, conferences, and workshops; soliciting public comments on proposed regulations, petitions, guidance documents, and draft technical reports; responding to requests for NRC documents under the Freedom of Information Act; reporting safety concerns; and providing access to hundreds of thousands of NRC documents through the NRC Web site; and
- participates in Open Government initiatives that focus on open, accountable, and accessible government and engage the public in dialogue and interactions, such as the use of social media and interactive high-value data sets.



*The NRC Headquarters complex, located in Rockville, MD.*

# FY 2011 Accomplishment Highlights

## Reactors

- completed all required inspection and assessment activities of the Reactor Oversight Process, including the initiation of 21 reactive inspections
- renewed 12 reactor licenses
- logged 1,300 reactor licensing tasks and activities
- collaborated with States, Federal agencies, and licensees in responding to significant natural events, including tornados, floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes
- initiated preconstruction inspections at Vogtle Units 3 and 4, and Summer Units 2 and 3
- monitored ongoing construction inspections at Watts Bar
- conducted safety and environmental reviews of the first two new reactor combined license applications and a mandatory hearing for the Vogtle application
- approved cyber security plans for all nuclear power plants
- completed significant emergency preparedness rulemaking
- processed National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 805 pilot applications and coordinated the review schedule for 29 upcoming NFPA 805 submittals
- responded to the Japan nuclear accident and began implementation of the lessons-learned initiative, including the Near-Term Task Force report
- hosted the third Integrated Regulatory Review Service lessons-learned workshop
- wrote the national report on the safety of U.S. nuclear power plants, "United States Fifth National Report for the Convention on Nuclear Safety"
- conducted the final phase 1 ignition (zirconium fire) test of the Sandia Fuel Project's single full-length insulated commercial pressurized-water reactor fuel assembly
- issued the Safety Culture Policy Statement (applicable to all licensees)
- participated in 18 new international agreements on cooperative research with other countries, adding to the existing 90 active agreements
- published extensive research results on a wide variety of topics to confirm the safety of operating facilities

## Materials and Waste

- reviewed and approved three new uranium recovery licenses and the restart of one uranium recovery facility



- oversaw the safe construction of the URENCO LES enrichment facility and the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility
  - implemented the License Tracking System, Version 2, and the National Source Tracking System, Version 2.2
  - issued the final policy statement on the protection of sealed radiation sources containing cesium-137 chloride
  - oversaw the orderly closure of the NRC's Yucca Mountain high-level waste repository licensing program
  - conducted safety and environmental reviews and the mandatory hearing for licensing the AREVA Eagle Rock centrifuge enrichment facility in Idaho
  - enhanced coordination with the States through the Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program and the State Liaison Officers
  - made substantial progress on numerous rulemakings (including 10 CFR Parts 20, 35, 37, 40, 61, 73, and 74)
- ## Corporate
- ensured that construction of Three White Flint North remained on schedule
  - oversaw the One White Flint North lobby expansion and ongoing interior renovation
  - implemented the new Financial Accounting and Integrated Management Information System
  - improved the Human Resources Management System
  - awarded the information technology support contract (the largest contract that the NRC has ever awarded)
  - launched Agencywide Documents Access and Management System—Version P8
  - held the 23rd Annual Regulatory Information Conference
  - launched the new public Web site with improved navigation, content, and accessibility
  - launched the use of social media at the NRC (external blog, Twitter, and YouTube)
  - held 1,040 public meetings
  - processed 381 Freedom of Information Act requests (closed 338)
  - awarded \$12.4 million in grants to 91 minority-serving (higher education) institutions
  - received highest large-agency ranking in all four of Office of Personnel Management's key indices: leadership and knowledge management, performance culture, talent management, and job satisfaction

## Organizations and Functions

The NRC's Commission consists of five members nominated by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate for 5-year terms. The President designates one member to serve as Chairman, principal executive officer, and spokesperson of the Commission. The members' terms are staggered so that one Commissioner's term expires on June 30 every year. No more than three Commissioners can belong to the same political party. The members of the Commission are listed below. The Commission as a whole formulates policies and regulations governing nuclear reactor and materials safety, issues orders to licensees, and adjudicates legal matters brought before it. The Executive Director for Operations carries out the policies and decisions of the Commission and directs the activities of the program and regional offices (see Figures 2 and 3).

### Commissioner Term Expiration

Commissioner	Expiration of Term
<i>Allison M. Macfarlane, Chairman</i>	<i>June 30, 2013</i>
<i>Kristine L. Svinicki</i>	<i>June 30, 2017</i>
<i>George Apostolakis</i>	<i>June 30, 2014</i>
<i>William D. Magwood, IV</i>	<i>June 30, 2015</i>
<i>William C. Ostendorff</i>	<i>June 30, 2016</i>

The NRC has its headquarters in Rockville, MD, and maintains four regional offices in King of Prussia, PA; Atlanta, GA; Lisle, IL; and Arlington, TX. The NRC includes the major program offices described below:

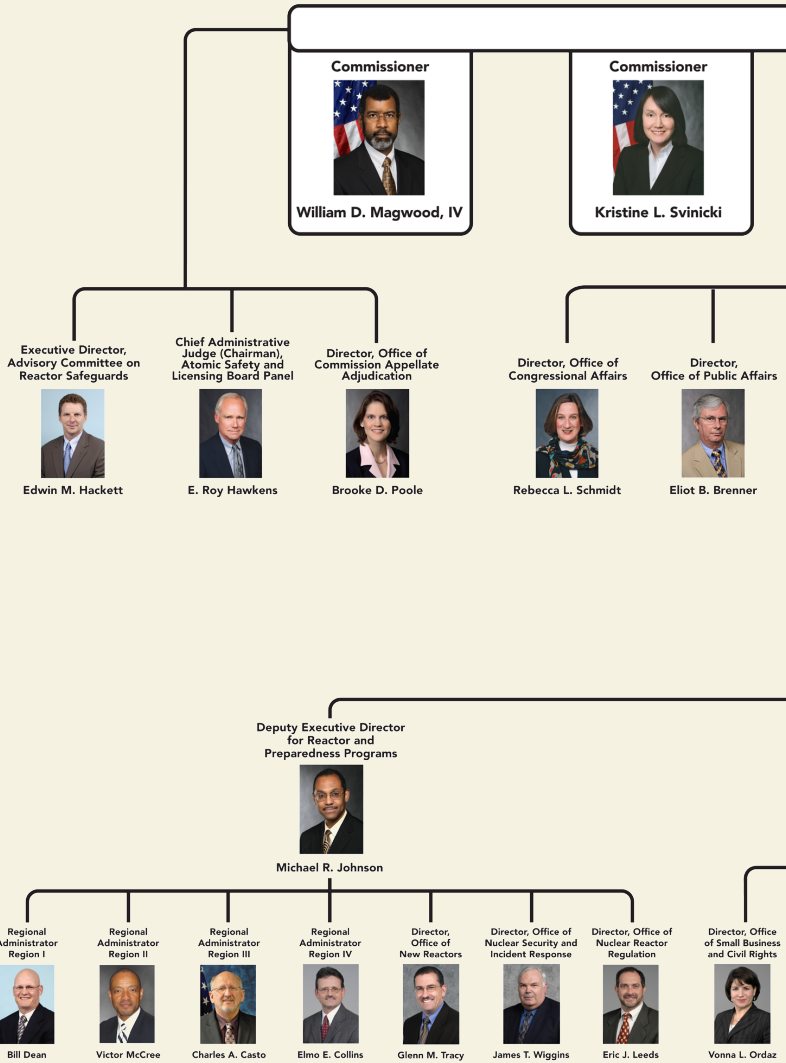
**Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation** handles all licensing and inspection activities associated with the operation of existing nuclear power reactors and research and test reactors.

**Office of New Reactors** provides safety oversight of the design, siting, licensing, and construction of new commercial nuclear power reactors.

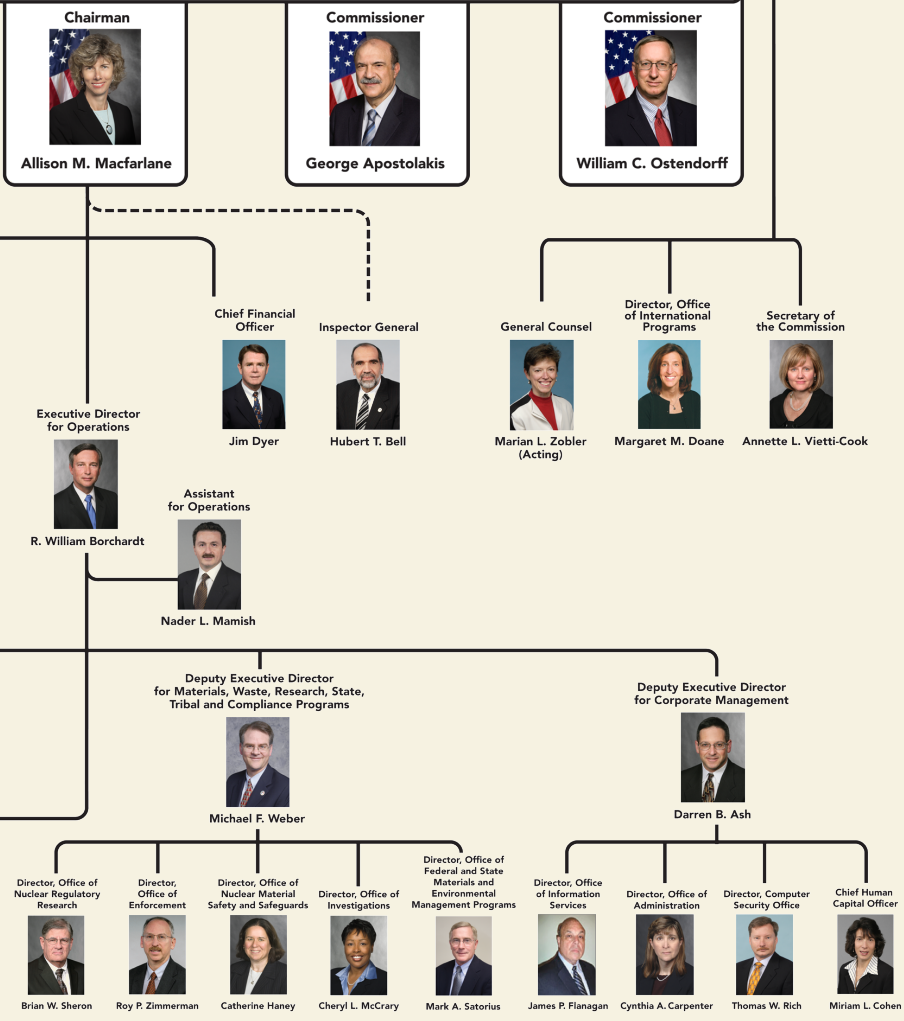
**Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards** regulates activities that provide for the safe and secure production of nuclear fuel used in commercial nuclear reactors; the safe storage, transportation, and disposal of high- and low-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel; and the transportation of radioactive materials regulated under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

# Organizations and Functions

Figure 2. NRC Organizational Chart



# The Commission





**Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs** develops and oversees the regulatory framework for the safe and secure use of nuclear materials; medical, industrial, academic, and commercial applications; uranium recovery activities; low-level radioactive waste sites; and the decommissioning of previously operating nuclear facilities and power plants. It works with Federal agencies, States, and Tribal and local governments on regulatory matters.

**Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research** provides independent expertise and information for making timely regulatory judgments, anticipating problems of potential safety significance, and resolving safety issues. It helps develop technical regulations and standards and collects, analyzes, and disseminates information about the operational safety of commercial nuclear power plants and certain nuclear materials activities.

**Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response** oversees agency security policy for nuclear facilities and users of radioactive material. It provides a safeguards and security interface with other Federal agencies and maintains the agency's emergency preparedness and incident response program.

**Regional Offices** conduct inspection, enforcement (in conjunction with the Office of Enforcement), investigation, licensing, and emergency response programs for nuclear reactors, fuel facilities, and materials licensees.

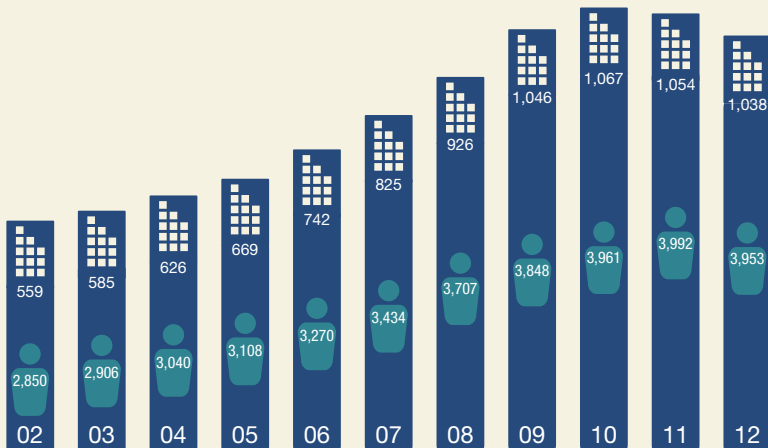
## Budget

For fiscal year (FY) 2012 (October 1, 2011–September 30, 2012), Congress appropriated \$1.0381 billion (\$1,038.1 million) to the NRC. The NRC's FY 2012 personnel ceiling is 3,953 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff (see Figures 4 and 5). The Office of the Inspector General received its own appropriation of \$10.9 million. The amount is included in the total NRC budget. The breakdown of the budget is shown in Figure 5.


By law, the NRC must recover, through fees billed to licensees, approximately 90 percent of its budget authority for FY 2012, less the amounts appropriated from general funds for waste-incident-to-reprocessing and generic homeland security activities. The NRC collects fees each year by September 30 and transfers them to the U.S. Treasury (see Figure 5). The total budget amount to be recovered by the NRC in FY 2012 is approximately \$909.5 million.



**Figure 4. NRC Budget Authority and Personnel Ceiling, FYs 2002–2012**

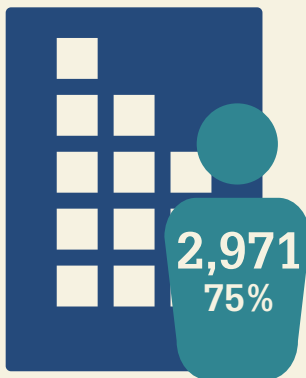


 Budget Authority  
Dollars in Millions

 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Staff

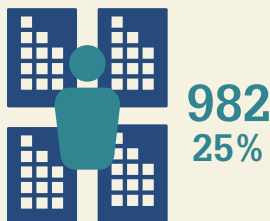
Note: Dollars are rounded to the nearest million.

### Headquarters

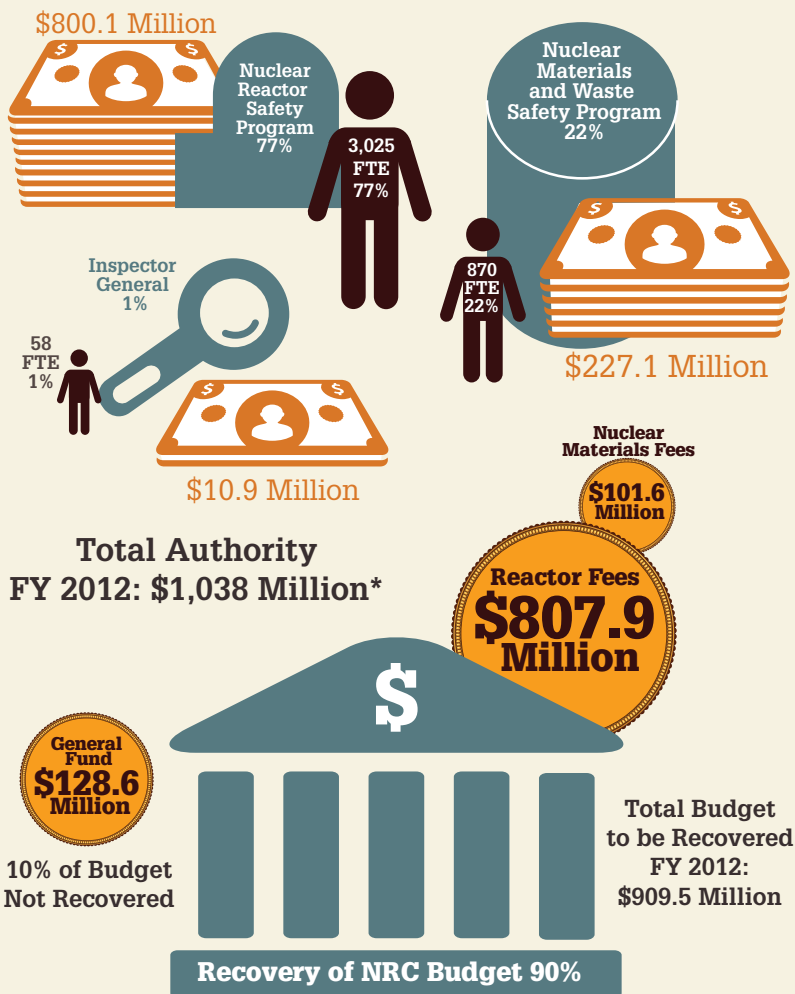


## FY 2012 Staff by Location Total FTE: 3,953

### Regions



**Figure 5. NRC FY 2012 Distribution of Budget Authority and Staff; Recovery of NRC Budget**



Note: The NRC incorporates corporate and administrative costs proportionately within programs.