



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, DC 20555-0001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

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

No. 04-115

September 15, 2004

NRC PROPOSES TOUGHER EXPORT-IMPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGH-RISK RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is proposing tougher licensing requirements for the export or import of high-risk radioactive materials that could be used in so-called “dirty bombs” or other terrorist weapons.

“This action is an important part of the government’s effort to protect the American people from the malevolent use of radioactive materials while continuing to permit their peaceful use in a wide range of industries and medicine,” Commission Chairman Nils J. Diaz said.

“The United States has taken the lead in persuading the international community to strengthen the control of high-risk radioactive materials that could conceivably fall into the hands of our adversaries,” Diaz added. “This proposed regulation is another step by the Commission to protect the common defense and security at home and abroad from the threat of radiological terrorism.”

The proposed rule would implement export-import provisions of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources adopted last year by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The United States played a key role in developing the Code of Conduct and, at U.S. urging, the Group of Eight Industrial Nations agreed at their June 2004 summit in Sea Island, Ga., to implement the Code’s export-import provisions by December 2005.

The new NRC regulations would require specific licenses for all exports and imports of high-risk radioactive materials (in sealed sources or in bulk) as defined in the proposed rule. The proposed rule’s lists of nuclear materials and radioactivity levels of concern are essentially identical to those found in the Code of Conduct. Anyone in the United States wishing to export or import these materials would be required to apply for NRC approval. Under current NRC regulations, these radioactive materials may be exported or imported under a general license, which does not require filing an application to the NRC or the issuance of licensing documents.

Comments on the changes will be accepted for 75 days following publication of the proposed rule in the *Federal Register*, expected shortly. Comments should include the identification number **RIN 3150-AH44** in the header or subject line. Comments may be mailed to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff.

They may be e-mailed to: SECY@nrc.gov , via the NRC's rulemaking Web site at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov> , or through the Federal Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> . Comments may also be hand-delivered to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on federal workdays.

###