



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO INCREASE OVERSIGHT AT PEACH BOTTOM NUCLEAR PLANT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission will conduct additional inspections at the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station in Delta, Pa., to independently verify and assess Exelon's efforts to address security issues at the plant. The two-unit site is operated by Exelon Nuclear.

NRC Region I Administrator Samuel J. Collins said, "Although Exelon's performance has not yet crossed any specific thresholds mandating increased oversight, the staff considers it prudent to apply additional resources to the security program at Peach Bottom while we continue to monitor and assess Exelon's performance."

In late September, the NRC sent an Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) to Peach Bottom to look into assertions that security officers were inattentive while on duty at the plant. Through that inspection, the NRC confirmed there had been multiple occasions on which multiple security officers were inattentive. However, the NRC also determined that the plant's security program was not significantly degraded as a result.

The NRC issued a Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL) on Oct. 19 to ensure continued security plan effectiveness. In the CAL, Exelon committed to take a number of additional steps to address the inattentiveness issue and to monitor the transition from a contract to an Exelon guard force.

A subsequent inspection was conducted earlier this month to assess the significance of AIT findings, evaluate Exelon's root-cause analysis of the inattentiveness issues and determine whether corrective actions are sufficient to prevent recurrence. The results of that inspection will be discussed during a meeting between NRC officials and Exelon managers on Dec. 3 at 1 p.m. at the Peach Bottom Inn, at 6085 Delta Road in Delta. It will be open to the public for observation.

Under the NRC's reactor oversight program, a plant's performance determines the level of inspection conducted at the site. To provide additional oversight, the agency can decide to deviate from the process and conduct further inspections, etc., when warranted by the given situation. Any such plans are proposed in a memo from the Regional Administrator for approval by the Executive Director for Operations. The memo, called a "deviation memo," was approved earlier today and provides a formal vehicle to document the NRC's additional inspection plans to assess Exelon's progress in transitioning to an in-house security organization, and to independently verify Exelon's actions identified in the CAL and its root cause analysis.

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