



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC BEGINS IMPLEMENTING THE NEW NATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, one of 32 signatories of the new National Response Plan, has begun implementing the plan and its nuclear/radiological incident annex. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on behalf of the federal government, officially unveiled the new plan today in a ceremony in Washington, D.C.

“The agency has required significant emergency response and security upgrades at facilities and now, with the implementation of the new plan, the NRC and the entire emergency management community are better prepared than ever to respond to both man-made and natural disasters,” said NRC Chairman Nils J. Diaz.

Technical experts from within the NRC participated in developing the National Response Plan and its nuclear/radiological incident annex, and Chairman Diaz signed the plan on behalf of the commission on Nov. 29, 2004.

The National Response Plan standardizes federal incident response but does not change the NRC’s statutory authority and responsibility to nuclear facilities and the communities in which they are located. It also introduces new structures, such as the Interagency Modeling & Atmospheric Assessment Center, which provides one source for information related to predictions of the consequences of an airborne release of hazardous materials. In addition, the plan’s nuclear/radiological annex places greater emphasis on response to terrorist incidents involving radioactive material than the previous Federal Response Plan, and clarifies operational responsibilities and coordination functions.

Consistent with the new coordinating features of the plan, NRC’s response to significant events will involve support to DHS, including the Homeland Security Operations Center and the Interagency Incident Management Group.

To ensure licensees and other NRC stakeholders understand the new plan, the NRC has been holding a series of workshops across the country for emergency officials, the nuclear industry and other interested parties. The final regional workshop will be held in Orlando, Fla., later this month. A meeting for the general public will be held at the agency’s Rockville, Md., headquarters; details will be posted on the NRC Web site.

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