U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
AGENCY E-GOVERNMENT ACT IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE
September 21, 2007

This report responds to the August 14, 2007, memorandum from Ms. Karen Evans to Chief Information Officers on the subject, "FY 2007 E-Government Act Reporting Instructions."

Overview

In accordance with the guidance in the August 14, 2007, memorandum, Section 1 of this report discusses the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) implementation of a key electronic government initiative, the NRC's Document Intake and Review Project (DIRP). Section 2 provides the requested links to the NRC's Web site where information is made available to the public.

Section 1 - Document Intake and Review Project

A: Describe how the initiative is transforming agency operations

The NRC has not received an application for new construction and operation of a new nuclear power plant in more than 30 years. This poses a particular challenge to the NRC as it prepares for the review of 3 design certification reviews, 20 new reactor license applications and associated environmental reviews, and 4 early site permit reviews. The Office of New Reactors (NRO) has been tasked with preparing the NRC for the unprecedented level of planning and infrastructure development (both physical and regulatory) required to support these new reactor applications, which the NRC expects to receive for review beginning in October 2007.

As a result of these significant changes in workload and the complexities of the expected submissions, the agency needed new tools and technologies to assist the staff in managing workload and day-to-day operations. In addition, current document processing procedures would not allow the NRC to process the volume of submissions and meet its target processing timelines. NRO needed to streamline the submission of license application documents from the industry and provide timely and organized access to NRC reviewers.

The DIRP examined the current methods of receiving and processing license application documents (including design control documents (DCDs), early site permits, and combined license applications) and made the necessary improvements via both business process reengineering and automation. The solution integrates with the existing Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) for capturing official agency records as well as the integrated workspace planned by NRO for reviewing license applications. This solution is essential to process the projected volume of submissions in a timely and efficient fashion.

The DIRP solution addresses critical business processes and functions. It automatically uploads and profiles the electronic submissions into ADAMS and ensures the integrity of submissions; provides revision control of submissions in ADAMS; provides the ability to reference previously submitted documents stored in ADAMS and eliminates duplicate entries; streamlines the processes and eases the burden of the Document Processing Center in loading complex submissions and profiling multiple revisions into ADAMS; provides reviewers with the capabilities for navigating (including hyperlinks), viewing, and copying the submission documents; allows NRC staff to review the application electronically as intended by the applicant; provides standards and guidelines for the structure of electronic submissions, which were derived through dialogue with the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI); and meets regulatory requirements for records management, archival, and retention.

B: Explain how your agency maintains an ongoing dialogue with interested parties to find innovative ways to use information technology for this initiative

The NRC coordinated with NEI to hold working group sessions with the industry. These sessions presented proofs of concept and collected input and feedback on electronic submission formats. They were successful in allowing the NRC to understand industry best practices and in defining an information technology solution for submitting electronic license applications.

The NRC collaborated with NEI and industry to achieve the following: guidelines on the format and organization of the submissions, including establishment of references to previously submitted documents; a structure for electronic submissions on CDs/DVDs that has been mutually agreed upon by the NRC and the industry; and, the definition by the NRC of an electronic packing slip in XML format, included within the CD/DVD, and agreed upon by the industry

NEI expressed its appreciation in a letter from the Senior Project Manager, Leslie Kass, dated July 31, 2007:

> We appreciate the efforts of the Office of Information Services to include the industry's perspectives in the development of the packing slip tool for electronic submittals. We believe that our interactions resulted in a better product and have helped us to make informed decisions about file structures and names in preparation for the COLA submittals.

C: Identify external partners (e.g., Federal, State, or local agencies; industry) who collaborate with your agency on the initiative

The NRC engaged NEI to coordinate working group sessions with industry representatives. The NRC worked with Westinghouse as a pilot user to process a DCD through the electronic submission process. The NRC is also collaborating with the NRG Energy South Texas Project and Amarillo Power to create electronic license applications for submission through the DIRP process.

D: Identify improved performance (e.g. outcome measures) by tracking performance measures supporting agency objectives and strategic goals

The DIRP supports the efficient management of and access to license application information, thereby improving the efficiency of the regulatory processes. Applications are loaded into ADAMS in a more timely fashion.

This project helps to expedite the review processes and provides a more effective and efficient way to manage license applications. It makes it easier for NRC employees to acquire, access, and use the information needed to perform their work

It also enhances the manner in which the NRC provides services to licensees. This solution improves the NRC's ability to conduct business electronically with the industry for license application submittals.

As noted above, current document processing procedures would not allow the NRC to process the volume of submissions and still meet its performance goals.

E: Quantify the cost savings and cost avoidance achieved through implementing the initiative (e.g., by reducing or eliminating other investments in information technology)

Through 2012, the DIRP initiative will support the processing of an estimated 35 COLA and DCD submissions with an estimated savings of at least five and a half million dollars.

By implementing the DIRP initiative, the Document Processing Center (DPC) and NRO conserve personnel resources while increasing the usability of the documents. The DPC has avoided additional resource costs to process the new license applications into the agency's document management system, ADAMS.

The applicants and industry are able to submit license applications electronically in a format that better serves their needs and is more compatible with their current infrastructure.

Additional benefits to the NRC include productivity improvements to access and review license applications directly from ADAMS via the NRO collaborative workspace, the availability of license applications to NRC staff and the public in a more usable electronic format supporting hyperlinks, and the ability to support the timeline for internal access and timely reviews.

Prior business processes accepted electronic or paper submissions of documents. These documents did not contain profiling information; therefore, document processing staff had to validate, scan/load, and profile them into ADAMS one at a time before distributing individual CDs to reviewers.

The new revised processes for the DIRP request that the licensee provide electronic submissions (CDs/DVDs) containing basic profiling information in a packing slip. The NRC project manager can then complete any profiling information required, and the document processing staff can perform an automated load without manually scanning or profiling each file. In addition, the staff now performs validation of the format using a representative sample of each submission. NRC reviewers can now access the latest revisions directly from ADAMS through the NRO central integrated workspace.

F: Explain how this initiative ensures the availability of Government information and services for those without access to the Internet or for those with disabilities

License submissions consist of PDF files, and NRC guidance requests they comply with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The use of simple layouts, consistent application of styles, accessible table formats, and the inclusion of alternate text for images improves the ability of people with disabilities to use the information.

The NRC does have service provisions for people without access to the Internet. The NRC maintains a Public Document Room (PDR) where copies of NRC publicly available records can be read. Copies can be ordered in person or by telephone. The PDR has a toll-free number (800-397-4209) to assist members of the public who do not have Internet access. The PDR can also provide bibliographies based on subject searches of the public databases to give users an idea of the documents that are available. The PDR has a fee-based copy service. It is not uncommon to refer people to the nearest public library for further assistance since most public libraries now have Internet access.

G: Explain how the project applies effective capital planning and investment control procedures

This project was managed as an enhancement to the existing ADAMS investment. Change requests were submitted to the ADAMS Engineering Review Board and reviewed and prioritized for implementation.

Section 2—Agency Information Management Activities

Please provide the link(s) to your agency's Web site where the following information is located:

    A. Your agency's Information Resources Management Strategic Plan.

http://adamswebsearch.nrc.gov/idmws/ViewDocByAccession.asp?AccessionNumber=ML06
3320593

    B. Final determinations, priorities, and schedules. Also include your agency's information dissemination product catalogs, directories, inventories, and any other management tools used to improve the dissemination of and access to your agency's information by the public.

- Get Copies of Documents—http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/copies-docs.html
- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Guide—http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/foia/foia-request.html
- Citizen's Guide to U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Information (NUREG/BR-0010, Rev. 4)—http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/brochures/br0010/index.html
- Government Information Locator Service—http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/gils/index.html

C. Your agency's FOIA handbook, the link of your agency's primary FOIA Web site, and the Web site link where frequent requests for records are made available to the public.

The FOIA Guide provides the procedures for submitting a request to the NRC under FOIA and is available via http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/foia/foia-request.html.

D. A list of your agency's public Web sites disseminating research and development (R&D) information to the public, describing for each whether the Web site provides the public information about federally funded R&D activities and/or provides the results of Federal research.

The agency's public Web site as a whole (i.e., http://www.nrc.gov) disseminates R&D information to the public, specifically through the following pages:

- NUREG-series contract reports—http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/contract/index.html

- research activities—http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/regulatory/research.html

The Web site provides information about federally funded R&D as well as the results of Federal research.

E. An inventory describing formal agency agreements (e.g., contracts, memorandum of understanding) with external entities (e.g., partnerships with State and local governments, public libraries, industry and commercial search engines) complementing your agency's information dissemination program, briefly explaining how each agreement improves the access to and dissemination of Government information to the public.

The NRC has formal agency agreements with several external entities that complement NRC's information dissemination program. The NRC uses the U.S. Government Printing Office's Superintendent of Documents to disseminate its NUREGs, and has an agreement in place to participate in the Federal Depository Library Program and their Sales Program. NRC also is required to send the Library of Congress File Center 15 copies of all its published documents.

The Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories administer the NRC's RuleForum/TechConferenceForum sites under a DOE lab agreement. RuleForum is used by the NRC to provide information on NRC rulemaking actions electronically and provide the public with the opportunity to comment electronically.

The agency also contracts with On-Line Video Service for web streaming of all Commission meetings and some public meetings.

F. An inventory that describes your agency's National Archives and Records System (NARA)-approved records schedules(s) or the link to the publicly posted records schedules(s), and a brief explanation of your agency's progress to implement NARA

Bulletin 2006-02. For the brief explanation please report the number of systems for which a record schedule was submitted to NARA in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 and the number of systems still requiring records schedules.

NUREG-0910, Revision 4, "Comprehensive Records Disposition Schedule," includes a description of all records (in any format) that currently have a NARA-approved records retention schedule; however, the NRC does not make this NUREG available to the public, as it is considered an internal guidance document. NRC Management Directive 3.53, "NRC Records Management Program," revised March 15, 2007, is available externally at http://adamswebsearch.nrc.gov/idmws/ViewDocByAccession.asp?AccessionNumber=ML071160026. This management directive does not report on the actual transfer of electronic records but does include instructions on implementation requirements for format and media.

The NRC did not submit any record schedules to NARA in FY 2007 but instead conducted an inventory of all electronic information systems. The agency then determined which items were not records and therefore already covered under NUREG-0910 and which were covered by the General Records Schedule. For those systems that still require schedules, the NRC has 90 systems covered in 14 draft schedules and 140 systems remaining to be scheduled. The agency expects to submit schedules to NARA in FY 2008 so that all 230 systems are covered.

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