



NRC NEWS

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NRC APPROVES CHANGES TO THE DESIGN BASIS THREAT AND ISSUES ORDER FOR CATEGORY 1 FUEL CYCLE FACILITIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, after extensive deliberation and interaction with stakeholders, has approved changes to the design basis threat (DBT) for two category 1 fuel cycle facilities in Virginia and Tennessee that possess enriched uranium used in nuclear reactors. The changes will be issued by an Order amending the design basis threat for theft or diversion of strategic quantities of special nuclear material.

The Order, which is being issued today, will be effective immediately but allows a transition period for full implementation. With this action completed, the Commission expects that there will be a period of regulatory stability during which the two licensees can consolidate this and previously ordered security enhancements.

The details of the design basis threat for theft or diversion are confidential national security information and will not be released to the public. Today's Order builds on the changes made by the Commission's August 21, 2002 Order which made interim security enhancements at these two facilities. The DBT was arrived at after discussions with cleared stakeholders from other Federal agencies, the two State governments and the two licensees.

Under NRC regulations, category 1 fuel cycle facility licensees must ensure that the physical protection plan for each site is designed and implemented to provide high assurance in defending against the DBT to ensure adequate protection of public health and safety and common defense and security. Changes in those plans will now be made and submitted to NRC for approval.

"With the completion of this Order," Chairman Nils J. Diaz said, "the public should be reassured that the nation's category 1 fuel facilities are well-secured against potential threats. The NRC intends to continue working closely with the Department of Homeland Security and

other Federal agencies, as well as with State and local law enforcement and emergency planning officials to ensure an overall integrated approach to the security of these critical facilities.”

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