



NRC NEWS

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NRC SCHEDULES MEETING TO DISCUSS 2010 PERFORMANCE OF ROBINSON NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have scheduled a meeting for Thursday, March 24 to provide information on the agency's assessment of safety performance at the Robinson nuclear power plant during 2010.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. EDT with a discussion of last year's safety performance as well as NRC oversight and inspection. The meeting will be held at the Coker College Library's Daniels Boardroom at 300 E. College Ave., in Hartsville, S.C. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session.

The Robinson plant, which has one pressurized-water reactor, is located near Hartsville, about 26 miles northwest of Florence. It is owned and operated by Progress Energy.

Overall, the NRC staff concluded that the Robinson plant operated safely in 2010. However, the NRC has decided to increase its level of oversight and inspection at the Robinson plant based on inspection findings and performance indicators.

Robinson exceeded the threshold for unplanned reactor shutdowns during the year's third quarter, which resulted in a "white" performance indicator. In addition, there were three "white" inspection findings at the plant. "White" means a finding of low to moderate safety significance. The first "white" finding involved the failure to correct a problem with an emergency diesel generator.

The second and third "white" findings were identified after an NRC Augmented Inspection. The second involved the licensee's failure to adequately design and implement operator training associated with reactor coolant pump seals. The third finding was related to a failure to adequately implement required procedures following a reactor trip in March.

"The NRC evaluates nuclear power plants in a systematic and detailed way each year," said NRC Region II Administrator Victor McCree. "These reviews and the additional inspections and oversight at Robinson will ensure that the plant is operated in a way that protects people near the plant and the environment."

The NRC uses color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to assess plant performance. The colors start with “green,” which has very low safety significance, to “white,” “yellow” and “red,” based on increasing significance of the issues. Inspection findings and performance indicators are updated on the NRC’s web site (www.nrc.gov) each quarter.

The annual assessment letter for the Robinson plant is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/rob_2010q4.pdf.

Inspections are carried out by the NRC resident inspectors assigned to the plant and by inspection specialists from the Region II office in Atlanta. A series of regular and supplemental NRC inspections have been scheduled for the Robinson plant this year, and the results of those inspections will be documented in publicly available inspection reports.

Current performance information for Robinson is available on the NRC web site at www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/ROB2/rob2_chart.html.

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