



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING ON MAY 5 IN MACEDON, N.Y. TO DISCUSS ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF GINNA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting on Thursday, May 5, regarding the agency's annual assessment of safety performance for the Ginna nuclear power plant during 2010.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. at the Ginna Emergency Operations Facility, located at 1255 Research Forest Road in Macedon, N.Y. Prior to the session's conclusion, there will be an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of the NRC staff regarding the plant's performance, as well as the NRC's oversight of the facility.

"Our Annual Assessment reviews allow us to step back and gauge whether the nuclear power plants we regulate are on the right track in terms of performance and adhering to the highest levels of safety," NRC Region I Administrator Bill Dean said. "Once we've completed these evaluations, we reach out to the public to share that information and to receive their feedback at a location near each plant. We welcome and value these exchanges."

The NRC utilizes a combination of color-coded inspection findings and performance indicators to measure plant performance. The colors start with "green", representing very low safety significance, and increase to "white", "yellow" or "red", commensurate with the significance of the issues involved.

Overall, the Ginna plant operated safely during 2010. At the conclusion of last year, as assessed through the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, the facility had one "Greater than Green" inspection finding in the area of security that was finalized on Dec. 2, 2010. Details of the finding are considered sensitive information and therefore they are not released to the public, but it will result in additional NRC oversight in the area of security for Ginna in 2011.

In addition, the plant had a single "white" (low to moderate safety significance) performance indicator open. The performance indicator involves problems affecting a turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump, which is used to help cool down the reactor during a sudden shutdown. Specifically, the performance indicator for the pump exceeded the "white" threshold

in the third quarter of 2009 due to reliability and unavailability issues. As a result of the “white” performance indicator, Ginna remains in the “Regulatory Response” column of the NRC’s Action Matrix (http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/actionmatrix_summary.htm) and will continue to receive additional NRC oversight in that area until the performance indicator returns to “green.”

Two NRC “white” inspection findings had also been identified regarding the turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump – one in the first quarter of 2009 and the other in the fourth quarter of 2009. Four NRC inspectors conducted a supplemental inspection from July 5-23, 2010, to ensure Constellation fully understood the root and contributing causes of the problems; to allow the NRC to independently assess the extent of the condition and determine if safety culture problems contributed to the issues; and to provide assurance that sufficient corrective actions have been implemented to prevent a recurrence. Based on the inspection results, the two “white” inspection findings were closed out.

Routine inspections are carried out by two NRC Resident Inspectors assigned to each plant and by inspection specialists from the agency’s Region I Office in King of Prussia, Pa. In 2010, the NRC devoted approximately 6,400 hours to inspection of the Ginna plant, including three major team inspections. Among the areas being inspected at Ginna this year are radiological safety, permanent plant modifications, heat sink performance and emergency preparedness.

The agency issues its review of performance at specific plants twice a year. Inspection findings and performance indicators are also updated on the NRC’s web site, www.nrc.gov, each quarter. Following the release of the annual performance reviews every March, the public is provided with an opportunity to discuss the results. The meetings, which are held in the vicinity of the plant, are in keeping with the NRC’s commitment to transparency and openness with regard to its activities.

The annual assessment letter for Ginna is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/LETTERS/ginn_2010q4.pdf. The notice for the public meeting is available in the NRC’s Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML111101187. ADAMS is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Help in using ADAMS can be obtained via the NRC’s Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail at: PDR.Resource@nrc.gov.

Current performance information for Ginna is available on the NRC web site at: http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/GINN/ginn_chart.html.

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