



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa.resource@nrc.gov Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

No. 11-074

May 3, 2011

OPENING REMARKS OF NRC CHAIRMAN GREGORY B. JACZKO AT TODAY'S BRIEFING ON EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Good morning. Before we begin today's meeting on emergency planning, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge Public Service Recognition Week and to thank the NRC staff for everything they do on behalf of the American people. Throughout my time with the Commission, I have always been impressed by their expertise, experience, and dedication to our important mission. Although the Commission never loses sight of the staff's efforts, I am glad that we have the additional opportunity during Public Service Recognition Week to recognize their excellent work.

With that, I'll turn to the subject of today's meeting – the draft final rule on emergency planning, which is currently before the Commission. Effective emergency planning is a key tenet of our agency's defense-in-depth philosophy for protecting public health and safety. Even as we work hard to ensure that licensees prevent accidents from happening in the first place, we also require that licensees develop strategies to mitigate and contain them in the event that they do.

In line with our national approach to emergency preparedness, we recognize that this is a shared responsibility of federal agencies, state and local authorities, and the private sector. That is why we have gone well beyond what is formally required to involve the public, licensees, and other stakeholders in this process. Throughout this multi-year effort, they actively participated and contributed significantly to the development of this rule, and it is a stronger, more effective regulation because of their participation. This is a model of how we should approach our rulemaking in this area and others.

As you may know, the Japan task force also will examine this issue as part of its comprehensive safety review. It is, of course, possible that the task force may make recommendations for additional changes to our emergency planning program. That does not, however, detract from the importance of finishing the work at hand and moving forward with the concrete improvements to our regulatory framework included in this rule.

I also want to acknowledge our close working relationship with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as the strong work of the NRC staff in developing this rule.

###

News releases are available through a free *listserv* subscription at the following Web address: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>. The NRC homepage at www.nrc.gov also offers a SUBSCRIBE link. E-mail notifications are sent to subscribers when news releases are posted to NRC's website.