



# NRC NEWS

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## **OPENING REMARKS OF NRC CHAIRMAN GREGORY B. JACZKO AT THE MANDATORY HEARING FOR NEW REACTORS AT THE VIRGIL C. SUMMER SITE**

Good morning. I call this hearing to order. We are here today to conduct a mandatory hearing, as required by Section 189(a) of the Atomic Energy Act, on South Carolina Electric & Gas Company's combined license application to build and operate two new reactors at the Virgil C. Summer site near Jenkinsville, South Carolina.

In reviewing a new reactor application, the NRC has the responsibility to carefully analyze and thoroughly scrutinize the important safety, security, and environmental issues involved in constructing and operating a nuclear power plant. For the past three years, the NRC staff – drawing on the varied talents and expertise of the agency – has worked diligently to complete the necessary safety and environmental reviews.

In conducting this mandatory hearing, the Commission's role is to serve as a check on that work. Our job is to determine whether those reviews have been adequate to support the necessary regulatory findings. Those findings fall into two categories – safety and environmental. They include whether the staff's environmental analysis meets the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act; whether the applicant has the necessary technical and financial resources; and ultimately whether the facility will be constructed and operated safely and securely. A detailed list of these findings was published as part of the notice for today's hearing.

Today's hearing follows our hearing on the Vogtle application just two weeks ago. Although the structure of today's hearing will be very similar to that one, its substantive focus will differ somewhat. Since we discussed many of the generic design issues for the AP1000 in the previous hearing, we will focus to a greater extent on site-specific issues. Also, the Commission will examine the full breadth of the Final Environmental Impact Statement in today's hearing because an Early Site Permit – which would have addressed certain environmental issues – was not completed for this application.

The mandatory hearing is one of the final steps of our licensing process. The Summer application, in fact, is only the second to reach this step in the Part 52 new reactor licensing process. The Commission is committed to moving forward with this hearing and reaching a decision on this application in a thoughtful, timely manner that befits the important safety, security, and environmental issues under review.

I want to thank my colleagues for their efforts in preparing for this important hearing, as well as the many NRC staff who have worked on this application. Would any of my colleagues like the opportunity to make opening remarks?

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