



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON REVISIONS TO SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comment on a proposed rule that would amend its regulations governing the requirements pertaining to the design basis threat (DBT). These security regulations specify the DBT that nuclear power plants and certain related facilities must be able to defend against with high assurance.

The proposed rule includes requirements related both to radiological sabotage, and theft or diversion of strategic special nuclear material. The specific adversary characteristics related to the DBT are protected and are not publicly available.

Following a thorough review of security after the September 2001 terrorist attacks, the NRC issued supplemental DBT requirements by Orders that contained additional detailed adversary characteristics. These Orders required nuclear power plants and "Category I fuel cycle licensees" to revise their physical security plans, security officer training and qualification plans, and contingency response plans. The Orders resulted in revisions to the licensees' protection strategies, including increased guard patrols, additional physical barriers and better coordination with law enforcement and the military. The proposed rule would amend the NRC's regulations to, among other things, include the supplemental security requirements previously imposed by the Commission's April 29, 2003, DBT Orders. The proposed rule would also define the level of security necessary to ensure public health and safety.

In part, this rulemaking also addresses a petition filed by the Committee to Bridge the Gap, which asked that the DBT be amended to include attacks by air. The NRC considered the issues raised in the petition and continues to evaluate them.

Comments must be received within 75 days of publication in the *Federal Register* to guarantee consideration by the NRC. Comments submitted later than this date may be considered if practical. They can be mailed to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C., 20555-0001, ATTN: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff. Comments can be hand-carried to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md., between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on federal work days, or they can be faxed to 301-415-1101. E-mail comments can also be sent to SECY@nrc.gov. In addition, comments can also be submitted through the NRC's eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. The entire proposed rule will also be available at that Web location.

More information about the DBT and security requirements for NRC licensees can be found on the NRC's Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/safety-security.html>.

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