

**U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Open Government Plan
One Year Assessment
April 2011**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has a long history of, and commitment to, openness with the public and transparency in its regulatory process. We welcomed the opportunity to support President Obama's Open Government Initiative and to implement the associated directive issued by the Office of Management and Budget on December 8, 2009.

At the first anniversary of the Open Government Initiative, the NRC is pleased to report that the state of the health of its Open Government program is very good.

In April 2010, the NRC published its Open Government Plan, which OpentheGovernment, an open government coalition, rated as 6th among the 26 plans published at that time. In particular, the NRC's plan focuses on the agency's flagship initiative, enhancing stakeholder engagement in order to expand the agency's stakeholder community and engage a broader public audience. The plan enumerates a program of activities focusing on the three pillars of the agency's Open Government program—transparency, participation, and collaboration.

To maintain focus on the Open Government program, the NRC has established the Open Government Advisory Group, and the agency's Deputy Executive Director for Corporate Management (the NRC's Open Government Accountability Official) has endorsed its charter. The NRC has established communications goals and, to keep the public aware of the agency's progress, posts its Open Government Plan milestones and updates a "dashboard" to summarize status and provide highlights and updates.

One of the most significant accomplishments of the agency's Open Government program in its first year was the deployment of the NRC external blog (<http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>). The NRC external blog is intended to increase agency collaboration and interaction with the public. The NRC blog debuted on January 28, 2011, with a welcome message from NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko. The blog serves as a vehicle for informing the public; explaining and clarifying the NRC's actions, roles, and responsibilities; raising awareness about the agency and its mission; and opening a new place for dialogue with the public. Since the blog's launch, staff members from throughout the NRC have written posts on topics ranging from the NRC's role in international nuclear affairs to new ways to find information on the NRC Web site. At the March 8–10, 2011, Regulatory Information Conference, hosted annually by the NRC, attendees received information about the blog's availability. The service had been averaging about 350 views a day for March, but on March 10, 2011, views topped 1,000.

With the advent of Japan's nuclear emergency at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, the blog played a key role in informing the public and explaining and clarifying the NRC's actions, roles, and responsibilities, as reflected in the following statistics:

- The blog received more than 3,000 views during the first weekend after the event.
- Peak views in a single day exceeded 5,500.
- Total views from when the blog opened on January 28, 2011, through March 31, 2011, exceeded 60,000.

The NRC public Web site also provided a vehicle for information dissemination during the event in Japan, with site requests increasing up to a factor of four. Despite large increases in usage, performance of the Web site and the blog was not affected. Consistent with work already underway in support of the NRC's flagship initiative, the agency has given staff access to YouTube and Twitter to improve information access in support of the event in Japan.

The NRC has also been highly effective in meeting (and in fact exceeding) its goals for the publication of high-value datasets. Since publication of the Open Government Plan in April 2011, the NRC has published 21 high-value datasets, significantly more than the 11 identified in the plan. The agency monitors monthly download data (also posted to the Web site) to gain insights on usage and has found that the plant status and reactor demographics datasets are the most visited. Procedures for identifying, prioritizing, and publishing high-value datasets are in place, and efforts are underway to identify additional high-value datasets from both internal and external sources. The agency has also added its reactor inspection reports to the rotating pane of the Data.gov home page.

The NRC's efforts to further openness with the public and transparency in its regulatory process are reflected in recent scores on the American Customer Satisfaction Index, based on surveys of Federal Web sites. The NRC ranked 11th out of 32 Federal agencies on the survey's transparency index. The agency has also seen positive results from the release of its unified public Web search capability in December 2010, with the site search satisfaction score, as reported by ForeSee Results, improving from 68 before the new search to 73 at the end of March 2011. Also, the NRC received MeriTalk's 2010 Merit Award in recognition of the agency's collaboration and transparency efforts.

As noted above, the NRC will continue to work with the staff and stakeholders to identify additional high-value datasets for publication. The agency will continue to focus on implementing its flagship initiative to enhance stakeholder engagement. The agency is developing a discussion forum to serve as a vehicle for live question and answer sessions between the public and NRC staff online. The forum will allow for a more dynamic dialogue on important and timely topics of interest to the NRC and the public. In addition, the NRC expects to implement the use of social media as an adjunct communication tool as the technology continues to evolve and present opportunities, and the agency will announce specific social media initiatives on the NRC public Web site.