

POLICY ISSUE INFORMATION

December 28, 2000

SECY-00-0242

FOR: The Commissioners

FROM: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF CRITERIA FOR
FUNDING AGREEMENT STATE TRAINING

PURPOSE:

To provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of criteria for funding Agreement State training during fiscal years 1999 and 2000 as requested in Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM)-SECY-97-183.

BACKGROUND:

In SRM-SECY-97-183, the Commission approved the proposed criteria for evaluating Agreement State requests for NRC funding of training and associated travel with modification as directed in the SRM. The Commission directed the staff to develop an additional criterion which would establish a limit on the total number of training requests that the NRC will approve for an individual State over a three year period to ensure that States do not rely upon NRC funding as a matter of routine. The Commission also established a relative priority for class admission and directed the staff to inform the Agreement States of the new criteria. The Commission directed that at the conclusion of FY 1998, the staff should conduct its initial evaluation of the effectiveness of the criteria and their application over the 12-month period and propose modifications to the criteria or their application, as needed. The staff provided the information and evaluation in SECY-98-295 dated December 18, 1998.

The Commission also directed that, after three years of experience in applying the criteria, the staff should evaluate the program again to determine if the criteria have been effective in providing an incentive for the Agreement States to fund the full costs of their programs for training State staff.

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DISCUSSION:

State Requests For Assistance:

As discussed in SECY-98-295, New Mexico has been the only Agreement State that requested and was approved for financial assistance in attending NRC training courses. New Mexico

was approved for up to \$12,000 of assistance. The State actually expended \$ 4,408 in travel expenses plus \$3,537 in tuition that was waived for a total benefit for New Mexico of \$7,935. New Mexico had a special appropriation for staff training for one year, no significant funding this year, and has filed for fees that would support their training needs to be effective next year. With the implementation of these fees, New Mexico should have sufficient funding for the training of its radiation staff.

We have not received any other requests for assistance. In accordance with earlier discussions in SECY-98-295 to phase out NRC funding, the staff has discontinued inclusion of funding for hardship requests in the Office of State and Tribal Programs' (STP) budget beginning in FY 2001.

State Participation in NRC Training:

The staff tabulated the data for the courses attended by the Agreement States for the fiscal years 1998, 1999, and 2000 (see Attachment 1). The table below summarizes Attachment 1.

Agreement State Staff Attending Tuition Courses:	FY 1998	FY 1999	FY 2000
Total Paying Tuition	85	81	115
Total Space Available	100	82	64
Total for Tuition Courses	185	163	179
Agreement State Staff Attending Non-Tuition Courses	128	79	102
Total for All Courses	313	242	281

The number of Agreement State staff attending technical training dropped off in FY 1999 due to several reasons. Several courses were not offered at the same frequency, one was discontinued, and the demand for one course has declined. Most of the basic classes were full to capacity but several of the specialty classes were conducted with space still available.

The total funds collected each fiscal year from Agreement States paying tuition for training courses were:

	Total Funds Collected from Agreement States
FY 1998	\$106,309
FY 1999	\$120,351
FY 2000	\$196,498
Total Collected	\$423,158

These funds are accounted for as reimbursements to NRC's Salaries and Expenses Appropriation. The increase in tuition funds paid shows that some of the Agreement States have received additional funding for training their staff. The Agreement States that have not received additional funds for training are dealing with their training needs in several different ways which are discussed below.

Agreement State Training Needs:

An informal survey of most of the Agreement States was conducted to determine whether the current NRC training program is meeting the Agreement States' training needs as well as whether the Agreement States have been able to get sufficient funds to meet their training needs. About half of the Agreement States indicated that they generally have sufficient money for training with a mix of tuition paying and space available attendance. Most of the rest of the States indicated that they could meet the majority of their training needs by attending on a space available basis and do not have sufficient funds to pay tuition for all of their course needs. Several of the constraints on attending training that impact some State attendance include:

- State staff cannot get approval for out-of-State travel, even though funds are available.
- State staff retirement/turnover currently and, in the next five years, requires significantly more training for new staff than the current budget has allocated.
- States are paying tuition to meet only the critical training needs. Attendance at other courses is requested on a space available basis.

Several States have also taken actions to accomplish or meet specific training needs. For example, States have:

- Developed in-house courses for their staff so travel and tuition are not needed.
- Enhanced their on-the-job training to meet training requirements.
- Hosted NRC courses to cost effectively train their staff.

- Postponed inspections to fund travel for training.
- Postponed the purchase of equipment or supplies to pay for training.

Several States indicated that they had requested additional funding for training and they were denied the additional funds by either their legislatures or high level management. Therefore, they are looking at actions, such as those listed above, to maintain their programs.

Conclusion:

Based on the above, staff concludes that most States are able to meet their training needs through a combination of training options. The Commission's criteria also appears to have been effective in increasing additional State funding of training, although some States continue to face difficulty in funding their training needs. Therefore, the staff does not recommend any changes to the current policy for funding of Agreement State training. The staff considers the current policy to be working effectively. The Commission's Agreement State funding policy has been effective in increasing Agreement State acceptance of the programmatic responsibility to plan for and fund training of their staff. The majority of Agreement States have either developed their own training, contracted with outside training firms, or attended NRC training (either tuition paying or space available). Several courses were full and could not accommodate all the Agreement State training requests. Historically, this situation has existed and these students can usually be accommodated in the next training cycle.

RESOURCES:

STP has eliminated funds from its budget beginning in FY 2001 for training assistance to Agreement States for hardship requests consistent with earlier plans. The technical training resources in the Office of Human Resources' budget are sufficient to support the current training needs of the Agreement States.

COORDINATION:

The Office of General Counsel has no legal objection to this paper. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this Commission paper for resource implications and has no objections.

/RA by Patricia G. Norry Acting For/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

Attachment:
As stated

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STP-T-3

Agreement State Staff Participation in NRC Technical Training

Tuition Courses	FY 1998			FY 1999			FY 2000		
H-109 Applied Health Physics	1x ¹	18 ²	(4, 14) ³	1x	18	(7, 11)	1x	16	(7, 9)

Tuition Courses	FY 1998			FY 1999			FY 2000		
H-313 Tele & Brachytherapy	2x	19	(11, 8)	2x	20	(15, 5)	2x	17	(14, 3)
H-304 Nuclear Medicine	2x	19	(13, 6)	2x	22	(16, 6)	2x	18	(15, 3)
H-308 Transportation of RAM	2x	40	(10, 30)	2x	25	(10, 15)	2x	16	(9, 7)
H-120 Survey in Support of Decom.	1x	10	(7, 3)	0x			0x		
H-121 MARSSIM	1x	5	(4, 1)	4x	23	(8, 15)	2x	8	(7, 1)
H-305 Industrial Radiography	2x	24	(9, 15)	2x	24	(15, 9)	2x	20	(13, 7)
H-119 Air Sampling of RAM	1x	5	(2, 3)	1x	16	(3, 13)	1x	7	(4, 3)
H-111 Environ Monitoring for RAM	1x	4	(3, 1)	1x	1	(1, 0)	2x	17	(10, 7)
G-205 Root Cause/Incident Invest.	5x	4	(4, 0)	3x	3	(1, 2)	4x	19	(7, 12)
G-304 Inspecting for Performance	2x	22	(15, 7)	1x	5	(1, 4)	3x	37	(25, 12)
H-115 Pool Type Irradiator	1x	3	(3, 0)	0x			1x	4	(4, 0)
H-312 Internal Dose & WB Counting	1x	12	(0, 12)	1x	6	(4, 2)	0x		
TOTAL for Tuition Courses	22	185	(85,100)	20	163	(81, 82)	22	179	115, 64

Non-Tuition Courses	FY 1998		FY 1999		FY 2000	
H-201 HP Technology	2x ¹	20 ²	1x	9	2x	23
H-314 Safety Aspects of Well Logging	1x	17	1x	12	1x	13
G-109 Licensing Practices	2x	43	2x	35	2x	23
G-108 Inspection Procedures	2x	43	1x	13	2x	35
Introductory HP	1x	5	1x	10	1x	8
TOTAL for Non-Tuition Courses	8	128	6	79	8	102
TOTAL for All Courses		313		242		281

¹ Number of times the course was offered.

² Total number of Agreement State staff attending during the fiscal year.

³ Distribution of tuition vs. non-tuition paying Agreement State staff. (tuition paying, space available)