



NRC NEWS

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Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, DC 20555-001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA>

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NRC ORGANIZES FUTURE LICENSING PROJECT ORGANIZATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is forming a Future Licensing Project Organization to prepare for and manage future reactor and site licensing applications.

NRC's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation intends to staff the organization in phases with the objective of having a fully functional Future Licensing Project Organization by the end of September.

Several utilities and organizations have contacted the NRC to initiate discussions associated with the possible construction of new nuclear power plants in the United States. These include Exelon's request for a pre-application review of a Pebble Bed Modular Reactor and Exelon's stated intention to submit an application to build the Pebble Bed Reactor.

Licensees have also indicated to the NRC that applications for early site permits could be submitted in the near future. These permits would allow pre-certification of sites for possible construction of nuclear power plants. An application for design certification of the Westinghouse AP 1000, an advanced light water reactor incorporating "passive" safety features, also is expected next year. While the schedules for these activities are not certain, NRC is gearing up to carry out its licensing responsibilities efficiently.

This first phase group will be responsible for establishing a project management function for future licensing tasks that include updating parts of NRC regulations, review of the AP 1000 reactor design, preparation for Pebble Bed reactor licensing review, coordination with NRC's Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research on Pebble Bed reactor pre-application issues, environmental and siting project management and other tasks, including interaction with interested stakeholders. The group will be formed initially through rotational assignment of staff experienced in regulatory programs, including the design certification process.

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