

INFORMATION REPORT

December 13, 2004

SECY-04-0231

For: The Commissioners

From: William M. Dean, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO

Subject: SECY-04-0231 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK
ENDING DECEMBER 3, 2004

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*No input this week.

/RA/

William M. Dean
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
T. Kim, OEDO

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WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 3, 2004

The Weekly Information Report is compiled by the Office of the EDO and includes highlights of Headquarters and Regional Office activities.

Contact: T. Kim, OEDO by E-mail: TJK3@nrc.gov.

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*No input this week

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

Public Meeting on a Proposed Regulatory Issue Summary Related to Changes to Analytical Methodologies

On November 30, 2004, NRR staff held a public meeting at the NRC offices in Rockville, Maryland, regarding a proposed Regulatory Issue Summary (RIS) related to reporting requirements associated with changes to analytical methodologies for Emergency Core Cooling System (ECCS) and licensing basis accident and transient analyses. The RIS was precipitated by recent cases of licensees failing to properly report the impact of the results of changes to analyses of record for loss-of-coolant accidents (LOCAs) and concerns about unreviewed changes to non-LOCA analysis methods. The meeting was attended by representatives of the Nuclear Energy Institute, Westinghouse, Framatome, General Electric, several licensees and the trade press. The RIS will be revised to incorporate information obtained at the public meeting and will be issued for public comment in early 2005.

Information Notice (IN) 2004-20: Recent Issues Associated with NRC Medical Requirements for Licensed Operators

On November 24, 2004, the NRC issued the subject IN to all holders of operating licenses for nuclear power reactors, as well as research and test reactors to highlight concerns related to the conduct and documentation of medical examinations for applicants and holders of reactor operator and senior operator licenses. Recipients of the IN are expected to review the information for applicability to their facilities and consider actions, as appropriate, to avoid similar problems. However, suggestions contained in this information notice are not NRC requirements; therefore, no specific action or written response is required.

Information Notice (IN) 2004-21: Additional Adverse Effect of Boric Acid Leakage - Potential Impact on Post-Accident Coolant pH

On November 24, 2004, the NRC issued the subject IN to inform all pressurized-water reactor licensees of potential adverse effects of boric acid leakage that may not have been previously considered and to reemphasize concerns regarding boric acid accumulations on reactor plant equipment inside containment. The primary concern regarding boric acid leakage is corrosion of ferritic steel components. However, if boric acid deposits of sufficient magnitude are present in containment, dissolution of these deposits may also affect the pH of the reactor coolant in the containment sump. Recipients of the IN are expected to review the information for applicability to their facilities and consider actions, as appropriate, to avoid similar problems. However, suggestions contained in this information notice are not NRC requirements; therefore, no specific action or written response is required.

Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant - Issuance of Draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal

On December 1, 2004, NRR staff issued draft NUREG-1437, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants, Supplement 21, Regarding Browns Ferry

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Nuclear Plant, Units 1, 2, and 3," for public comment. This supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) includes the staff's preliminary analysis of potential environmental effects of the proposed action, the environmental impacts of alternatives to the proposed action, and mitigative measures available for reducing or avoiding adverse impacts. It also includes the staff's preliminary recommendation regarding the proposed action. A 75-day public comment period will begin with the Notice of Filing of the draft SEIS with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The staff has scheduled two public meetings on January 25, 2005, in Athens, Alabama, to present its analyses and accept public comments on the draft SEIS.

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Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

First Quarterly Senior Management Meeting with US Enrichment Corporation, Inc., (USEC)

On November 29, 2004, NRC staff met with management staff from USEC at the NRC offices in Rockville, Maryland, to discuss NRC's review status and management issues related to the USEC's application, dated August 23, 2004, for a gas centrifuge uranium enrichment facility -- the American Centrifuge Plant, proposed to be constructed in Piketon, Ohio. During the meeting, NRC staff discussed NRC's 30-month licensing schedule, including the 18-month schedule to complete its safety, safeguards, and environmental reviews. NRC staff also discussed the current licensing status, current issues, and hearing status. USEC staff gave a short presentation regarding current issues and the licensing schedule.

Issuance of 10 CFR Part 71 Certificate of Compliance for New Transportation Package Design

On November 30, 2004, the Spent Fuel Project Office issued a 10 CFR Part 71 Certificate of Compliance for a new transportation package (Model No. RAJ-II) for the shipment of fresh reactor fuel made from reprocessed weapons-grade uranium. This is the first transportation package licensed domestically that can ship this type of material which contains elevated levels of U-236. This package is part of a U.S./Russia, "Swords to Plowshares Program," which supports non-proliferation and downblending of 33 metric tons of highly enriched weapons-grade uranium into low-enriched fuel for commercial reactors.

Issuance of 10 CFR Part 72 Specific License for an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation

On November 30, 2004, the Spent Fuel Project Office issued a 10 CFR Part 72 License to the Foster Wheeler Environmental Corporation, to construct and operate an independent spent nuclear fuel storage installation at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). The facility will receive, repackage, and store spent fuel originally from the Shippingport Atomic Power Station, the Peach Bottom Unit 1 reactor, and various training and research reactors built by General Atomics (TRIGA reactors). Most of this fuel is currently stored at INEEL in above-ground spent fuel pools or dry underground storage facilities. The new facility will store the spent fuel in sealed stainless steel canisters placed inside steel tubes within a concrete storage vault.

Meeting of the Northeast High-Level Radioactive Waste Transportation Project

On November 18-19, 2004, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) staff attended a meeting of the Northeast High-Level Radioactive Waste Transportation Project in Portland, Maine. The Committee, which is composed of members from the Northeastern states, deals with safety and operational issues related to shipment of spent fuel and high-level waste. The major topics discussed at the meeting included the status and plans for the shipping program for the Waste Isolation Project Plant and the planned repository at Yucca Mountain; transportation routing; and transportation and state coordination issues. NMSS staff provided an update on topical issues of interest to the Committee and gave a brief presentation

on the recently completed full-scale drop tests in Germany. In addition to Northeastern state representatives, other meeting attendees included representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration, Nuclear Energy Institute, Midwest Council of State Governments, Western Governors' Association, and Department of Energy (Office of Environmental Management, National Nuclear Security Administration, and Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management).

Proposed Rule Signed by the Executive Director for Operations (EDO)

On November 30, 2004, the EDO approved a proposed for publication in the Federal Register rule that amends 10 CFR Parts 25 and 95, "Broadening Scope of Access Authorization and Facility Security Clearance Regulations." This amendment broadens the scope of the regulations to include persons who may need access to classified information or obtain facility security clearance in connection with licensing and regulatory activities under 10 CFR Parts 60 and 63 or in connection with other activities as the Commission may determine, such as vendors of advanced reactor designs.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

High-Burnup Fuel Testing Resumes at Argonne National Laboratory

Testing of high-burnup fuel and advanced cladding alloys is underway at Argonne National Laboratory to address reactor and spent fuel issues. A major element of the testing program is development of the technical basis for rulemaking to revise the cladding criteria in the loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA) rule, 10 CFR 50.46. This is part of NRC's current effort to make LOCA regulations more risk-informed and performance-based. Earlier this year, work on irradiated materials in the hot cell was halted because of the failure of remote manipulators. As of November 30, 2004, work on the project has now resumed fully. A public meeting is planned for late January 2005 to discuss test results and to present the detailed plans for the final phase of this work element.

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Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

Contract Awards

On November 24, 2004, a competitive Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) no. DR-38-05-367 was awarded to Performance Training Resources, Inc. under the General Service Administration's Federal Supply Schedule. The BPA is for provision on an as-needed basis of a 2-day classroom course in critical thinking, as well as follow-up coaching and counseling services. The NRC plans to pilot this course with staff from the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research in the near future. Based upon this pilot, the staff will evaluate the effectiveness of the training. Following evaluation of the pilot, the contract permits NRC to order up to an additional 115 courses as needed at a total estimated cost not to exceed \$487,000 over a three-year period.

On November 29, 2004, a competitive cost reimbursements contract no. DR-38-05-366 was awarded to Hummer Whole Health Management, Inc. The contractor will provide the NRC with an integrated program of health and fitness services as well as ergonomic and occupational safety and health services. The total estimated cost is \$6,430,297. The period of performance is five years, including four one-year options.

On November 29, 2004, a firm fixed-price type contract no. NRC-09-05-304, was awarded to Owusu and Company, under the Small Business Administration's 8(a) set-aside program. The Contractor will provide data entry and operational support services to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. The total value of the contract is \$1,791,840.00. The period of performance is five years, including one nine-month and four one-year option periods.

On November 29, 2004, a competitive small business set-aside contract no. NRC-10-05-397 was awarded to John Shorb Landscaping, Inc. The contract is for the removal of snow and ice from the NRC headquarters on an as-needed basis. The period of performance is five years, including four one-year options, with a total estimated cost of \$260,959.00.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Requests Received During the Period of
November 26 through December 2, 2004:

Depleted uranium combustion products; methods to detect aerosol uranium, aerosol uranium ion, or aerosol uranium combustion products	FOIA/PA-2005-0057
Investigation of July 23, 2004 incident, all correspondence between NRC and U.S. Customs	FOIA/PA-2005-0058
Transportation of plutonium to Cherbourg, September 20, 2004, all records	FOIA/PA-2005-0059
U.S. Court of Appeals Case No 01-1258, which, in part, vacated the 10,000 year compliance period in NRC's 10 CFR 63 or potential adoption of new or amended rules re: duration of compliance period, all correspondence between NRC, EPA or NAS	FOIA/PA-2005-0060
License No. 21-16597-01MD, Capital Pharmacy Inc., 5700 Executive Drive, Lansing, MI, all records	FOIA/PA-2005-0061

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Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

2004 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Progress Report Luncheon

On December 1, 2004, the CFC Agency Manager, attended a Campaign Management Progress Report Luncheon at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain the status of agency campaigns throughout the Washington, DC area and to recommend effective strategies for successful campaigns. To date, NRC has raised over \$296,000, which is 93% of the agency's dollar goal.

Arrivals		
Michael T. Cash	General Engineer (Technical Advisor)	OIG
Craig Hrabal	Nuclear Process Engineer (Criticality)	NMSS
Retirements		
Stefani Neidholdt	Secretary	R-IV
Bill S. Thurmond	Reactor Technology Instructor	TTC

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Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

Media Interest

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) received significant media inquiries on the following:

Local opposition to the Oyster Creek nuclear plant in New Jersey.

Safety-conscious work environment issues at the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear plants in New Jersey.

Possible NRC fines for Vermont Yankee over the misplaced fuel rod segments.

Other Public Affairs Items:

OPA staff assisted at a public meeting on safety conscious work environment issues at the Salem and Hope Creek nuclear plants in New Jersey.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
04-149	NRC Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards to Meet Dec. 2-4 in Rockville, Maryland (11/29)
04-150	NRC Licenses Spent Fuel Storage Facility at Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (12/1)
04-151	NRC Announces Opportunity for Hearing on Application to Renew Operating Licenses for Brunswick Nuclear Plant (12/1)
Regions:	
I-04-054	NRC Releases Two Inspection Reports on Vermont Yankee; Schedules Meeting (12/2)
II-04-056	NRC to Meet with U.S. Enrichment Corporation to Discuss Performance at Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant (12/3)
III-04-050	NRC Davis-Besse Oversight Panel to Meet Dec. 6 in Ohio (11/30)
III-04-051	NRC to Discuss Final Decommissioning of Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (12/1)

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SECY-04-0199	10/26/04	Request for Authorization to Issue a License for the Idaho Spent Fuel Facility, Under 10 CFR Part 72
SRM on SECY-04-0199	11/12/2004	(same)
Voting Record on SECY-04-0199	11/12/2004	(same)
2. SECY-04-0211	11/8/04	Final Amendments to 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix E, Relating to (1) Nuclear Regulatory Commission Review of Changes to Emergency Action Levels, Paragraph IV.B and (2) Exercise Requirements for Co-Located Licensees, Paragraph IV.F.2
3. SECY-04-0215	11/13/04	Final Report on Results of the National Materials Program Pilot Projects
Information Paper		
1. SECY-04-0210	11/08/04	Status of the Accident Sequence Precursor (ASP) Program and the Development of Standardized Plant Analysis Risk (SPAR) Models

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste, Notice of Meeting (12/13-14/2004).
2. ACRS Meeting of the Subcommittee on Reactor Fuels, Notice of Meeting (12/15-16/2004).

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Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

Vermont Yankee - Issuance of Inspection Reports

On December 2, 2004, Region I issued two reports on recent inspections conducted at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon, Vermont. The first report documents the conclusions of an engineering team inspection that was conducted from August 9th through September 3. The preliminary results from that inspection were released on November 5th and posted on the NRC web page. The second report contains the results of a special inspection to look into spent fuel segments that were reported missing at the facility. The team concluded the pieces found in July 2004 are the pieces misplaced in January 1980. One apparent violation involving inadequate controls for the two fuel rod pieces from 1980 through 2004 was identified. Both final inspection reports and the earlier preliminary findings are posted on the NRC web page at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/plant-specific-items/vermont-yankee-issues.html>. The findings of both inspections will be discussed publicly at a meeting of the Vermont State Nuclear Advisory Panel on December 16, 2004, at the Brattleboro Union High School, in Brattleboro, Vermont, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Salem & Hope Creek - Senior Management Site Visit and a Meeting with Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG)

On December 2, 2004, the Region I Regional Administrator, accompanied by staff members from both Region I and the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, visited the Hope Creek/Salem site. The Regional Administrator toured the facility with the resident inspectors and met with licensee management representatives. He also met briefly with United States Senator Thomas Carper from Delaware, who was visiting the site as a guest of PSEG. Senator Carper's visit was unrelated to the NRC's visit.

In addition, NRC staff, led by the Regional Administrator, held a public meeting with PSEG that evening to review the licensee's actions to improve performance in the area of safety conscious work environment. This meeting was a follow up to the NRC's July 30, 2004, letter on review of the work environment at the stations. PSEG presented its actions and results to date. PSEG stated that there has been "fragile progress" and acknowledged significant effort lies ahead to achieve substantial, sustainable progress.

Following the meeting with PSEG, several members of the public accepted the opportunity to address the NRC staff. Approximately 85 individuals attended the meeting.

New Jersey State Assembly Meetings on Oyster Creek License Renewal

On December 2, 2004, the New Jersey State Assembly's Environment and Solid Waste Committee held a meeting in Brick Township to discuss local community concerns regarding Oyster Creek, principally AmerGen's planned submittal in mid-2005 requesting license renewal. Approximately 200 members of the public, as well as local officials, attended. Speakers included Amergen senior management, union leaders, members of the public, and public interest groups. The NRC was not a participant.

A similar meeting is planned for Monmouth County December 9, 2004.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

Region II's Resident Inspector Counterpart Meeting

On November 30-December 2, 2004, Region II held a Resident Inspector Counterpart meeting at the Regional Office in Atlanta, Georgia. Some of the highlights from the meeting include presentations by the Deputy Executive Director for Reactor Programs, the Director of Communications, and the Chief Information Officer.

Senior NRC Management Visit to Sequoyah Nuclear Plant

On December 2, 2004, the Director, Division of Reactor Safety, accompanied the Deputy Executive Director for Reactor Programs on a visit to the Sequoyah nuclear plant. They toured the facility with the resident inspector and met with licensee management representatives.

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Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 3, 2004

NRC/FEMA Exercise Scheduling Conference

On November 29-December 2, 2004, Region IV hosted the NRC/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Exercise Scheduling Conference. This conference included a public meeting on the new National Response Plan, and NRC initiatives in emergency preparedness and security. Representatives from Region IV, the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, as well as the Department of Health and Human Services, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, and the Department of Homeland Security made presentations during the meeting. Other meeting attendees included representatives from States, FEMA (Regions IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX and X), Food and Drug Administration, various offsite response organizations, and representatives from licensed utilities in Region IV.

Senior NRC Management Visit to Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station

On November 30, 2004, the Deputy Executive Director for Homeland Protection and Preparedness and the Region IV Deputy Regional Administrator visited the Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station. They toured the facility with the resident inspector and licensee representatives and met with licensee management representatives.

Public Meeting with Entergy Operations, Inc.

On November 30, 2004, the Region IV Regional Administrator accompanied by members of the Region IV and the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation staff held a public meeting with representatives from the Entergy Operations, Inc., at the Region IV offices in Dallas, Texas. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss performance of Entergy's Southern fleet including, Arkansas Nuclear One, Grand Gulf Nuclear Station, River Bend Station, and Waterford Steam Electric Station, Unit 3.