

Suspension of the SALP Program

In a staff requirements memorandum (SRM) dated September 15, 1998, the Commission approved the staff's proposed suspension of the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) process as discussed in COMSECY-98-024, "Response to Issues Raised Within the Senate Authorization Context and July 17, 1998 Stakeholder Meeting." The Commission noted that the staff needs to ensure that the Plant Performance Reviews (PPRs) effectively monitor and describe NRC assessment of licensees and allocate NRC inspection resources appropriately.

A press release was issued on September 16, 1998, announcing that the SALP program had been suspended. On September 21, 1998, the staff issued a SECY paper to inform the Commission of its plans to suspend the SALP program for an interim period until a new integrated assessment process has been implemented. The staff presented the following implementation plans:

SALP: Suspend the SALP program for an interim period. SALP boards that have convened will complete the SALP process as described in Management Directive 8.6, including issuing SALP reports and holding public meetings.

PPRs: Continue to perform Plant Performance Reviews (PPRs) for each plant at approximately six-month intervals and forward the results to licensees in a letter with the updated Plant Issues Matrix (PIM) and inspection schedule attached that is placed in the Public Document Room. In addition, we need to ensure that licensee performance assessment information is provided consistently in PPR

cover letters by issuing more detailed guidance than is currently available in Inspection Manual Chapter (IMC) 0304, "Plant Performance Review." A public meeting will be held at those sites where a public meeting on NRC's assessment of licensee performance has not been held within the last two years. The purpose of the public meeting will be to discuss the results of the most recent PPR. Public meetings will continue to be held for most plants at approximately two year intervals (depending on the timing of the PPRs). More frequent meetings may be held at the discretion of the Regional Administrator based on licensee performance as documented in PIMs, inspection reports, and other publicly available information.

SMM: Perform Senior Management Meetings (SMMs) and the associated screening meetings annually versus semi-annually as directed by the SRM for SECY 98-045 dated June 30, 1998. Accordingly, the first annual SMM will be performed in April 1999.

Implementation guidance was provided to the regions via memorandum dated September 24, 1998. An administrative letter will also be issued to all power reactor licensees notifying them of the suspension of the SALP program. Final recommendations on the SALP program will be provided to the Commission as part of broader recommendations on the new assessment process in early 1999.

For more information on the suspension of the SALP program, contact Tom Boyce via e-mail (THB) or by calling 301-415-1130.

Implementation of the 7-Year Relocation Policy

SECY-98-152 was issued on June 29, 1998, to present the staff's approach to address attrition from the Resident Inspector (RI) Program and other related issues. An Agency Labor-Management Partnership Committee (ALMPC) subcommittee was formed to develop the issues and potential improvements associated with the current RI Program. Item 7 of the ALMPC Subcommittee report noted that it was unclear whether all employees in the RI Program as of January 1, 1998, would go from a 5-year to a 7-year tour limit or just those whose tours would have expired during the pilot period from fiscal year (FY) 1998 through FY 1999.

A memorandum was issued on September 21, 1998 which stated that all current RIs are now considered to have the option of a seven-year versus a five-year maximum tour length (for their current tour). New RI assignments will stipulate a seven-year maximum tour length. This policy decision should not preclude RI staff from relocating for promotions, voluntary reassignments, or management-directed reassignments. EDO Field Policy Manual Number 8, "Resident Inspector Relocation Policy," is being revised to reflect this change in policy. Copies of the September 21 memorandum should have also been dispersed to all affected staff.