

March 5, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Macfarlane  
Commissioner Svinicki  
Commissioner Apostolakis  
Commissioner Magwood  
Commissioner Ostendorff

FROM: Mark A. Satorius, Director /RA/  
Office of Federal and State Materials  
and Environmental Management Programs

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS ON RADIATION PROTECTION  
OF THE ENVIRONMENT

In the Staff Requirements Memorandum for SECY-08-0197, the Commission agreed with the staff and the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) that the current U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regulatory framework continues to provide adequate protection of the health and safety of workers, the public, and the environment. The Commission also agreed with the ACRS that there is no evidence that the current set of radiation protection controls is not protective of the environment, and that the NRC should not develop separate radiation protection regulations for plant and animal species. The Commission directed the staff to continue to monitor international developments in this regard and keep the Commission informed.

On December 11, 2009, March 8, 2010, March 4, 2011, and again on February 24, 2012, the staff provided updates on international developments (Agency Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession Numbers ML093410405, ML100560337, ML100460149, and ML120410461). This memorandum provides a further update on activities.

The International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) conducts its work through various task groups and working parties between meetings of the Main Commission and meetings of the Committees. During 2012, the ICRP Commission and each of the Committees met separately. A new term for the Main Commission and Committees will begin in June 2013, and the first meeting will be a joint meeting in Abu Dhabi in October 2013. Membership of the Main Commission and Committees will be determined in April 2013.

Committee 5 on Protection of the Environment, in conjunction with Committee 4 on Practical Application of the Commission's recommendations, prepared a draft report on the ICRP approach to protection of the environment and its application under different exposure situations. The draft outlined an approach for integration of the protection of humans and the biota, focused on the optimization process. The report was available on the ICRP Web site [www.icrp.org](http://www.icrp.org) during the summer of 2012, and NRC staff provided comments. A revision of the

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report has been prepared by the Task Group, and is to be presented to the Main Commission for approval in April 2013.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is currently developing a Safety Guide on Radiation Protection of the Public and the Environment. NRC staff participated in consultant meetings in July 2012, and February 2013. The current draft is generally consistent with the approach taken in the United States to implement the National Environmental Policy Act, and focuses the use of reference animals and plants as a tool within an overall tool kit for making decisions. The draft Safety Guide clearly articulates that the use of reference plants and animals is one method for assessment that can be utilized. It is expected that the draft guide will be provided to the IAEA Radiation Safety Standards Committee late in 2013, and if approved, will be provided to IAEA Member States (including the United States) for comment. The NRC staff will continue to monitor the work of ICRP and IAEA, and review and provide comments when draft reports become available.

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