

July 15, 2015

MEMORANDUM TO: Stephen D. Dingbaum
Assistant Inspector General for Audits
Office of the Inspector General

FROM: William M. Dean, Director **/RA/**
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO SURVEY OF NRC'S SUPPORT PROVIDED TO
RESIDENT INSPECTORS (OIG-14-A-12)

This memorandum is in response to your memorandum dated April 7, 2015, regarding the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Audit, OIG-14-A-12, "Survey of NRC's Support Provided to Resident Inspectors" (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System accession number ML14335A713) and OEDO-15-00291. The Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation is providing a status update on the open recommendations. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Scott Morris of my staff.

Enclosure:
Status of Recommendations

CONTACT: Scott A. Morris, NRR/DIRS
(301) 415-1004

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**Survey of NRC's Support Provided to Resident Inspectors
OIG-14-A-12**

Status of Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

Identify a formal mechanism for obtaining Resident Inspectors' (RIs') perspectives regarding support issues.

Status:

Consistent with the status update provided by the agency to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) on January 13, 2015, the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) Self-Assessment Improvement Working Group has redesigned the internal "ROP Digital City" (<http://nrrtest.nrc.gov/rop-digital-city-dev/index.html>), developed an internal feedback mechanism (<http://nrrtest.nrc.gov/rop-digital-city/contact-us.html>), and initiated an effort to streamline the external ROP website. The internal ROP Digital City redesign was informed by approximately 45 interviews with various stakeholders including RIs, regional branch chiefs and project engineers, and staff from the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, the Office of New Reactors, the Office of Information Services (Customer Outreach Branch), and the Technical Training Center (including students in a class) in order to obtain a broad perspective and insights on support needs. The feedback and insight gathered were integrated into the ROP Digital City test site and publicized in the April 2015 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Inspector Newsletter. The NRC Inspector Newsletter provided a link to the test site and solicited comments and feedback on the test site. In July of 2015, the redesigned ROP Digital City website will be officially launched.

In concert with these global website enhancements, the agency has also taken actions to enhance communications specific to the needs and concerns of RIs. For example, the Division of Inspection and Regional Support (DIRS) established a dedicated ROP communications lead in the Performance Assessment Branch to act as an additional resource for matters concerning the ROP, and to ensure any RI feedback and concerns are captured and directed to the appropriate organization for response or action. This formal mechanism will also provide an alternative venue to ensure that RI support needs and concerns are being effectively and adequately managed.

Completion Date: 7/31/2015

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Recommendation 2:

Take measures to ensure that the roles and responsibilities for existing support systems for RIs' needs and concerns are communicated and understood by the appropriate management and staff, and are effectively communicated.

Status:

The status update provided to OIG on January 13, 2015, reflects that the agency remains committed to ensuring that the self-assessment activities described in the response to OIG-12-A-14, Recommendation 1, will assess the trends and effectiveness of RI support activities and determine the need for future corrective actions should they be needed. An additional step taken to ensure this outcome is the designation of staff in DIRS as a dedicated resource for matters concerning the ROP and its implementation, to include RI staff concerns, intended to ensure that all communications are captured and directed to the appropriate organization for response or action.

The NRC staff continues to believe that adequate guidance currently exists regarding the specific roles and responsibilities for addressing RIs' needs and concerns. Examples of such guidance include: (1) Inspection Manual Chapter (IMC) 1245, "Qualification Program for Operating Reactor Programs;" and (2) IMC 2515, "Light-Water Reactor Inspection Program – Operations Phase," Section 2515-11, "Inspector Policy." These documents, in conjunction with NRR/regional interface protocols outlined in the Division of Operating Reactor Licensing (DORL) Handbook (e.g., RI daily status calls with regional management and NRC headquarters staff (DORL project managers, and DIRS Operating Experience Branch staff)), provide an effective means for RI to raise concerns about support-related matters and a formal mechanism to ensure that effective management attention and oversight are maintained.

Completion Date: 12/31/2014

Point of Contact: Scott Morris, 301-415-1004