



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 3, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am submitting the report for the first quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 related to the NRC's progress on certain licensing actions and right-sizing commitments consistent with the direction first included in the Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, and continued in the Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the Energy and Water, Legislative Branch, and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2019.

The Joint Explanatory Statement directed the Commission to report on the following: 1) "the on-board strength of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, including any identified areas of critical skill shortages and targeted hiring strategies against these shortage areas"; 2) "actions taken to right-size the NRC in accordance with the recommendations of the Project Aim report, to include re-baselining assumptions and projection of FTEs and required budget authority"; 3) "progress to eliminate the backlog of pending licensing actions in the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation by 2017"; and 4) "progress to complete the licensing reviews of pending reactor license renewal applications (power and research reactors), combined license applications, early site permit applications, design certification applications, and uranium recovery applications (initial and renewal) against currently projected schedules."

The FY 2020 staffing level in the agency's enacted appropriation is 2,991 FTE. The NRC currently projects utilizing 2,791 FTE, which would be approximately 130 FTE below the FY 2019 utilization. The FTE resources cited include the Office of the Inspector General resources.

Since FY 2014, the NRC's workforce has declined considerably to adjust for changes in workload. The hiring of additional agency staff has been limited to only those skills that are critical to the agency operations or not available within the existing agency workforce. The NRC implemented a Strategic Workforce Planning process to improve our efforts in developing and managing the NRC workforce and to balance near-term work with long-term staffing projections. This process projects the amount and type of work anticipated over the next 5 years and identifies the skills needed in the workforce to perform that work. Through this process, both short- and long-term strategies are developed to inform the agency's efforts to recruit, retain, and develop a skilled and diverse workforce with the competencies and

agility to address both current and emerging needs and workload fluctuations. Given the projected attrition over the next 5 years, this process will help us to fill any resulting skill gaps.

The status of licensing activities is provided in Enclosure 1. The NRC continues to implement activities resulting from Project Aim, as described in Enclosure 2.

Please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Eugene Dacus, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at (301) 415-1776 if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Svinicki', with a stylized, flowing script.

Kristine L. Svinicki

Enclosures:

1. Progress on Licensing Applications
2. Project Aim Status Update

cc: Senator Patrick Leahy

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  
cc: Senator Patrick Leahy

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  
cc: Representative Kay Granger