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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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Comments on the NRC Proposed Rule on Revision
of Fee Schedules; 100% Fee Recovery

Boston Edison Company endorses the nuclear power industry comments offered to the NRC by the May 13, 1991 Nuclear Management and Resources Council (NUMARC) letter entitled, "Proposed Rule - Revision of Fee Schedules; 100% Cost Recovery, 56 Federal Register 14870, Request for Comments".

As with any change in an established process, the implementation dynamics are not totally predictable and remain to be worked out during the transition period. One hundred percent NRC budget fee recovery from nuclear industry fees vice the U.S. Treasury presents uncertainties with respect to future legislative oversight roles and the NRC budget review and approval process. Ensuring cost-effective expenditures and NRC staff workloads of proven cost benefit is necessary for nuclear power to remain as a viable alternative to other power generations forms. As such, the NRC budget preparation process should include opportunities for public comment and input. We recommend wording be added to the beginning of §171.13 "Notice", to require the yearly proposed NRC budget request be published in the Federal Register at least 90 days prior to the request being forwarded for legislative approval. This will allow licensees, ratepayers, and consumers an opportunity for input early in the NRC budget planning cycle, yet allow the NRC to continue to meet the statutory mandate of Public Law 101-508.

Similarly, an additional provision should be included in the rule to enable annual audits of NRC expenditure practices by a select team of industry elected representatives. This will afford utility managers an opportunity to more closely monitor and scrutinize the implementation of the NRC budget once approved, and in turn provide the capability to justify and explain these costs to their state regulatory commissions.


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