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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Region III Office of Public Affairs
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NRC STAFF SCHEDULES TWO-DAY PUBLIC MEETING IN CHICAGO AREA
ON STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has scheduled the last of three public meetings for November 7 - 8 in the Chicago to receive comments on its direction-setting issue papers resulting from the agency's strategic assessment process. Chairman Shirley Ann Jackson initiated the strategic assessment in September 1995 to provide a comprehensive, critical evaluation of the agency's direction and decision-making for the rest of this decade and into the next.

The meeting will be held at the Ramada O'Hare Airport Hotel, 6600 N. Mannheim Road, Rosemont, Illinois, two miles north of Chicago O'Hare International Airport. The meeting will be open to the public but advance registration is suggested.

In addition to the general public, all those who may be affected by NRC's strategic initiative --- public interest groups, nuclear industry groups, NRC licensees and their employees, Federal entities, Agreement States, non-Agreement States -- are encouraged to attend and provide comments on the issue papers.

The first day, from 9:15 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., will feature a plenary session entitled "Building Public Trust and Confidence," and will include discussion of the issue papers on public communications initiatives, the role of industry, and enhancing regulatory excellence.

The afternoon breakout sessions, from 1:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m., will cover issue papers on NRC's research program and international activities. Also during this time, the session "Assuring the Safe Use and Handling of Nuclear Materials" will be discussed, including issue papers on safety oversight of Department of Energy facilities, NRC's relationship with the Agreement States, and materials and medical oversight.

The following day, from 8:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., the session will feature, "Assuring Safe Operation of Nuclear Reactors," which will focus on issue papers covering reactor licensing for future applicants, operating reactor program oversight, power reactor decommissioning, and risk-informed, performance-based regulation.

From 1:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m., the session, "Assuring Safe Management

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of Nuclear Waste," will focus on low-level waste, high-level waste and spent fuel, and decommissioning of non-reactor facilities. An additional session on "Managing NRC Finances" will be held from 1:00 p.m. until 2:30 p.m.

For additional information, contact Anna May Haycraft at 301-415-3075, by internet e-mail: amh@nrc.gov, or by facsimile at 301-415-3707.

More detailed information on the strategic assessment and the meetings is available electronically from the NRC's Home Page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.nrc.gov> and on the FedWorld online service at 1-800-303-9672. Paper copies are available by calling NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209.

The comment period on the issue papers closes November 15. In addition to attending the public meeting, individuals may provide comments in writing and electronically. Comments may be sent by internet e-mail to secy@nrc.gov or by regular mail to Mr. John C. Hoyle, Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Chief of Docketing and Services Branch, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

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