



SECRETARY

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

April 3, 1997

RELEASED TO THE PDR

4/10/97

date

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Initials

MEMORANDUM TO: L. Joseph Callan
Executive Director for Operations
FROM: John C. Hoyle, Secretary
SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - COMSECY-96-068 -
STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT ISSUE PAPER:
DECOMMISSIONING - POWER REACTORS (DSI 24)

The Commission supports achieving finality in decommissioning requirements as soon as practicable. As the industry moves to a deregulated environment, decommissioning implementation costs must be understood and properly factored into planning decisions and/or rate recovery mechanisms. To this end, the Commission approves Option 2, pursue current direction and approaches more aggressively, for Decommissioning - Power Reactors (DSI 24) as the Final Commission View subject to the following comments.

The staff should address the issue of financial assurance for decommissioning. The staff should also address the issue of site specific decommissioning cost estimates by providing a rulemaking plan for Commission consideration.

(EDO)

(SECY Suspense: 4/30/97)

The staff should accelerate resolution of decommissioning rulemaking issues and consider the option of combining several rulemakings into a single rulemaking, or a few integrated rulemakings, if practicable. Risk-informed performance-based approaches to these rulemakings should be used only to the extent that the staff is ready to proceed with such an approach now.

The Commission is currently considering the issues of the radiological criteria for decommissioning in SECY-97-046 and the interim storage of greater-than-class-C waste in SECY-97-056.

The staff should consider the public comments received suggesting improvements in existing practices and rulemakings. These should include lessons-learned (e.g. packaging and transport), data available (e.g., survey costs) from recent decommissionings, and implementing radiological assessments coincident with the licensee's efforts.

To the extent that it does not compromise public health and safety, or delay the staff's completion of accelerated

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rulemaking, the staff should consider innovative regulatory approaches to decommissioning. Particular approaches to consider are those which can accelerate decommissioning in a safe manner, but with appropriate NRC oversight at critical stages in the process. Options the staff should consider include: taking a performance-based approach by only performing a radiological assessment of the site when it is ready to be released; placing an inspector onsite during specific phases of decommissioning (e.g. during active dismantlement); and, centralizing reactor decommissioning inspection programs in headquarters.

(EDO)

(SECY Suspense: 12/31/97)

The staff should provide the Commission with an analysis of whether or not the staff views entombment as a viable decommissioning option and how this option has been dealt with previously by the Commission. If the staff concludes that it is not a viable option, the staff should describe the technical requirements and regulatory actions which would be necessary for entombment to be a viable decommissioning option. The staff analysis should include the resources involved, potential decommissioning cost savings, and vulnerabilities.

(EDO)

(SECY Suspense: 9/2/97)

cc: Chairman Jackson
Commissioner Rogers
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Diaz
K. Cyr (OGC)
D. Rathbun (OCA)
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A. Galante (CIO)
R. Scroggins (CFO)