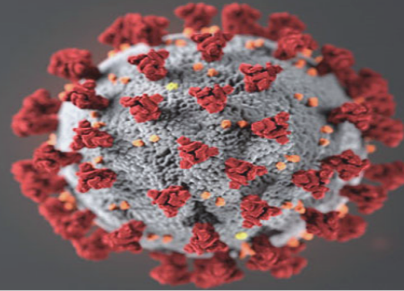


*Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards*

## **COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Oversight Activities Assessment**



### **Phase B Working Group Charter**

**March 2021**

#### **Background:**

The Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) is undergoing a phased approach for its *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Oversight Activities Assessment* effort. Phase A of this effort consisted of a short term evaluation of feedback received through a survey to all the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff with responsibility for implementing the oversight programs in the Nuclear Materials and Waste Safety Programs, and through numerous engagements discussing implementation of the oversight programs among the leadership team and staff. The Phase A objective was to assess this feedback and make recommendations to the leadership team to enhance practices or processes in place during the current COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) and share challenges and good practices in implementing the oversight programs during the PHE among staff in the various programs. Phase B is envisioned to be a more comprehensive evaluation by a working group with specialized inspection and programmatic experience and representation from each of the NMSS business lines and Regional Offices. The ultimate objective is to provide recommendations on potential enhancements to the inspection programs based on what has been experienced and learned during the COVID-19 PHE so that we can continue to effectively implement the oversight programs and position them for success in the future. Finally, Phase C is envisioned to be the implementation phase of this effort, consisting of implementing recommendations endorsed by NRC leadership.

#### **Purpose:**

The NMSS' *COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Oversight Activities Assessment* aims to evaluate the various practices, adjustments, processes, and different inspection techniques used to carry out our important oversight function associated with the Nuclear Materials and Waste Safety Programs. This assessment should provide recommendations to enable NMSS activities to become more agile, resilient, and efficient both during future PHEs and when operating under normal circumstances.

## Objectives:

To evaluate the various practices, adjustments, processes, and inspection techniques utilized to implement the nuclear materials and waste oversight programs during the COVID-19 PHE and develop recommendations to:

- (1) enhance the implementation of these programs during the current, ongoing COVID-19 PHE;
- (2) ensure inspection programs are adequately prepared for future public health emergencies; and
- (3) utilize experiences during COVID-19 to enhance any aspects of the current framework for the oversight programs (e.g., inspection planning practices, guidance, communications) to ensure we continue to implement comprehensive, consistent, resilient, and modern oversight programs into the future.

More specifically, the working group, at a minimum, will:

- a) Design and deploy various feedback mechanisms (e.g. interviews, surveys) that will build upon the feedback received during Phase A of this effort to assist in their evaluation. The feedback sources should be diverse, including input from all regions and programs, various staff grade levels, the different roles in the oversight programs, and expertise, and include external stakeholders' feedback (e.g. licensees, public) to include Agreement States.
- b) Gather and document the various practices, processes, inspection techniques, communications, and adjustments implemented by each program (Nuclear Materials Users, Spent Fuel and Transportation, Fuel Cycle Facilities, Uranium Recovery and Decommissioning) during the COVID-19 PHE and assess their effectiveness, efficiency, and consistency. This includes evaluating virtual or remote inspection practices and techniques.
- c) Identify what inspection areas in each program are most suitable for remote inspection from this point forward.
- d) Determine what modifications made to the program during COVID should be adopted to further evolve these programs to be more current, modern, flexible, robust, and consistent across business lines.
- e) Document any additional best practices and challenges from the implementation of the oversight programs encountered during the COVID-19 PHE.

## Deliverables and Timeline:

The main deliverable for this working group will be the development of a report documenting the overall approach, its assessment, and recommendations. The working group will also provide periodic updates to the steering committee as well as regional and NMSS management. High level timeline is provided below and subject to alignment and refinement as the working group seeks alignment with its steering committee.

| <b>Task</b>   | <b>Estimated Completion Date</b> |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Working group kickoff meeting</b>  | March 2021                       |
| <b>Develop project plan</b>   | March 2021                       |
| <b>Gather feedback (includes development and issuance of surveys, etc.)</b> | April – June 2021                |
| <b>Conduct Evaluation</b>   | June – July 2021                 |
| <b>Report Documentation</b>   | August 2021                      |

## Meeting Frequency and Communications:

- The working group will meet at least once a week for the duration of this effort. This may be adjusted based on specific deliverables.
- The working group will provide periodic updates to the Steering Committee. Briefings to the division directors of NMSS and the regions will be conducted quarterly and before issuance of the final report.
- The working group will be responsible for providing written and verbal updates on this effort for various meetings (internal, external, drop-ins etc.) and ticketed correspondence.
- The project plan shall include the timeline for the expected communications.

## Working group membership:

This evaluation should be performed by a diverse team with program office and regional representation from each business line in NMSS. The following are the working group representatives:

| <b>NAME</b>                            | <b>ORGANIZATION</b> |
|--|---------------------|
| LEIRA CUADRADO, CHAIR:                 | DFM                 |
| TBD, CO-CHAIR                          |                     |
| TONY MCMURTRAY (BACKUP: PAUL GOLDBERG) | MSST                |
| GEORGE ALEXANDER                       | DUWP                |
| AARON THOMLINSON                       | DFM                 |
| ELIZABETH ANDREWS, JONATHAN PFINGSTEN  | RI                  |
| TIM SIPPEL (BACKUP: LINDSEY COOKE)     | RII                 |
| LAURA CENDER (BACKUP: ZAHID SULAIMAN)  | RIII                |
| TBD                                    | RIV                 |

## Steering Committee

A Steering Committee will be formed to provide clear guidance and direction to the working group and collectively consider and recommend resolutions for significant issues and the status of key activities.

| <b>NAME</b>       | <b>ORGANIZATION</b> |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| CHRISTOPHER REGAN | NMSS/DFM            |
| LINDA HOWELL      | RIV/DNMS            |
| KEVIN WILLIAMS    | NMSS/MSST           |

## Charging Time

All time expended on this working group effort will be charged to an EPID that will be tied to its corresponding general oversight Cost Activity Code Number (CAC) for each business line.

EPID: 03-11-2021-0002 "Phase B Covid-19 Oversight Activities Assessment"

CAC Numbers:

- A33015, "NB SFST – Oversight Inspection"
- A34011, "NB-NMU-Nuc Mat Users Oversight-Inspection"
- A35009, "NB-DLLW-Oversight-Inspection"
- A38010, "NB-FF-Oversight-Inspection"

## Completion

This activity will be complete after final management decisions have been made on the Working Group's written report and its recommendations.

## Approval:

This charter and the above tasking are hereby approved by each business line owner:

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Andrea Kock, Director

Division of Fuel Management

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

X

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Kevin Williams, Director

Division of Materials Safety, Security, State, and Tribal Programs

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

X

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Patricia Holahan, Director

Division of Decommissioning, Uranium Recovery, and Waste Programs

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards