



U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
**34th ANNUAL REGULATORY
INFORMATION CONFERENCE**

MARCH 8-10, 2022

PREPARING FOR
TOMORROW

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Licensing and Oversight Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Nuclear Regulatory Commission

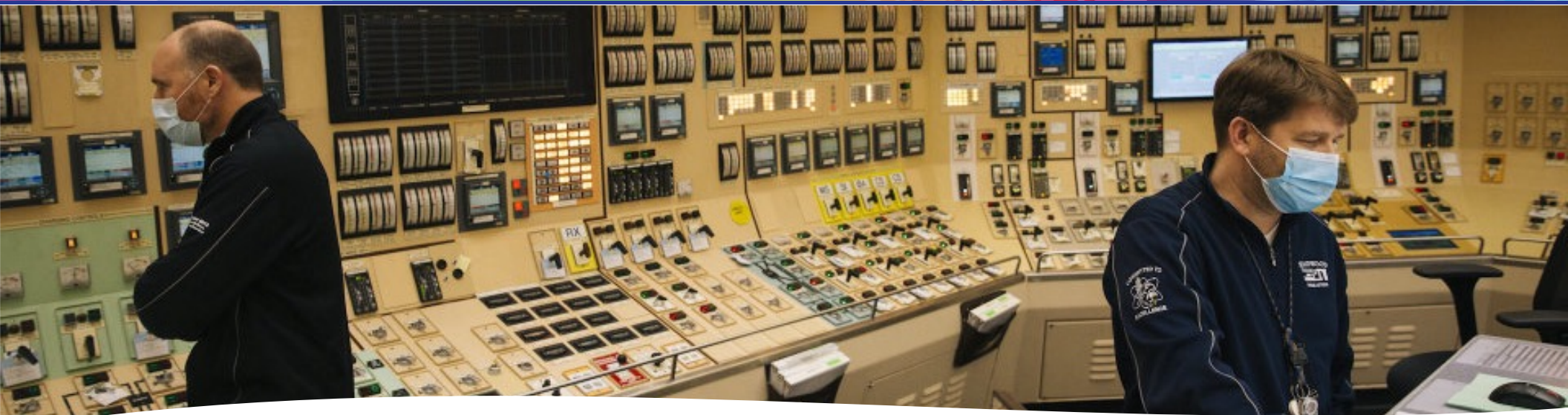


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Licensing during COVID-19 Pandemic

- Organizational agility
- Public and industry engagement
- Use of public web interface
- Focus workload management tool for related licensing actions
- Framework for expedited reviews
- Internal temporary staff review guides



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Reactor Oversight during COVID-19

Initial Response

- Reduced onsite resident inspector coverage
- Used hybrid team for inspections
- Delayed or deferred inspections, as needed
- Since some baseline inspections were not possible, assessed that public health and safety was adequately maintained

Lessons Learned

- Initial lessons learned captured throughout 2020
- Currently, identifying longer term lessons
- There is no suitable remote substitute for some of the on-site functions that our inspectors perform

Recovery

- Continued updating interim guidance to accommodate surges in COVID-19
- In Nov 2021, after re-entry, NRC returned to full implementation of the baseline inspection program
- No additional inspection activity planned as a result of COVID





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Force-on-Force (FOF) Inspections

- 2020 Temporary halt to full inspections
 - August 2020, modified procedure used to inspect elements of licensee protective strategy
- 2021 Modified FOF inspections that assessed strategy with minimum personnel
 - Balance struck to meet requirements and provide continued safety for licensee and NRC personnel
 - Tiered approach to account for site-specific conditions
- 2022 Full FOF inspection resumed
 - Same options as 2021 plus additional option for full FOF inspection



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Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards evaluation of inspection programs during the COVID-19 pandemic

Based on internal and external feedback:

- On-site inspections continue to be the most effective and preferred method of inspection
- Keep the option to employ flexibilities (i.e. remote, hybrid, in-office reviews of records), when appropriate
- Specific inspection guidance is warranted for pandemic preparedness

Report is available here ➡

