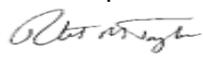




UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

January 16, 2024

MEMORANDUM TO: Daniel H. Dorman, Executive Director
Office of the Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Andrea D. Veil, Director  Taylor, Robert signing on behalf
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation of Veil, Andrea
on 01/16/24

SUBJECT: STAFF RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL'S SPECIAL INQUIRY INTO THE
U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION'S
OVERSIGHT OF RESEARCH AND TEST REACTORS
CASE NO. I2100162

This memorandum transmits the staff's review of the special inquiry by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) into the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) oversight of research and test reactors (RTRs) ([OIG CASE No. I2100162](#), dated September 29, 2023). It assesses the report's findings, observations, and assertions using established inspection guidance. This memorandum provides recommendations for actions to take as a result of this inquiry. The staff plans to implement the identified actions by October 31, 2024.

After reviewing the special inquiry, the staff determined that many of OIG's underlying observations were previously identified by the staff as part of their self-assessment activities. The staff's internal self-assessment of the NRC's RTR oversight program found no significant gaps; however, several enhancements to internal processes and procedures were identified. The staff has determined that the combination of site-specific licensing bases, a robust emergency response infrastructure, and the current oversight program are appropriately risk-informed and continue to provide adequate protection to public health and safety and the environment for RTRs.

The staff acknowledges OIG's important role and its efforts to assess the NRC's oversight program for the nation's RTRs and the findings documented in their special inquiry report. External and internal assessments of NRC programs, such as this report, offer valuable opportunities to gain insights and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of our programs in continuing to protect public health and safety. As enclosed, the staff offers clarifying comments on the specific findings and observations of this inquiry, including recommended actions to further improve oversight and guidance.

Enclosure:
As stated

CONTACT: Holly D. Cruz, NRR/DANU
(301) 415-1053

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DATED: JANUARY 16, 2024

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OFFICE	NRR/DANU/UNPL/PM	NRR/DANU/LA	NRR/DANU/UNPO/BC	NRR/DANU/UNPL/BC
NAME	MBalazik	NParker	TTate	HCruz
DATE	1/11/2024	1/11/2024	1/11/2024	1/11/2024
OFFICE	NRR/DANU/D	NRR/DD	NRR/D	
NAME	MShams	RTaylor	AVeil (RTaylor for)	
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