



Fuel Facility Licensing Best Practices Summit

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Meeting category and public participation

This is an Observation Meeting. The purpose of this meeting is for the NRC staff to discuss regulatory and technical matters with one or more groups. Attendees will have an opportunity to ask questions of the NRC staff or make comments about the issues discussed throughout the meeting; however, the NRC is not actively soliciting comments towards regulatory decisions at this meeting.



Meeting agenda

- Licensing best practices workshop
 - Pre-application
 - Submittal of an application
 - Acceptance review
 - Technical review
 - Issuance
- Any additional feedback on potential improvements discussed during the previous public meeting (April 10, 2025)



Licensing best practices workshop:

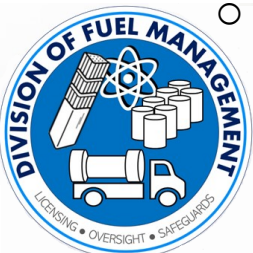
Pre-application

- Licensees/applicants should communicate the timing, scope, and level of confidence of potential licensing action submittals and any changes as early as possible.
 - NRC budgets are formulated several years in advance and directly impact staffing levels.
 - The level of confidence should consider the design phase (i.e., conceptual vs. detailed), status of related site activities, funding, related dependent licensing actions, and availability of feed material (e.g., High-Assay Low-Enriched Uranium).



Licensing best practices workshop: Pre-application (continued)

- Conduct robust pre-application engagements:
 - Discuss applicable requirements, guidance, and acceptance criteria.
 - Meetings should be at a sufficient level of detail and early enough for the NRC to provide actionable feedback, including items that would impact acceptance, likely result in requests for additional information (RAIs), or would make NRC review more efficient.
 - Focus on topical areas that historically have the highest level of complexity (e.g., integrated safety analysis [ISA], criticality safety, electrical/instrumentation & control, management measures, novel technology/methodologies, security requirements).
 - Consider submitting draft application for discussion – this could be done in pieces.
 - Document early alignment in meeting summaries.



Licensing best practices workshop: Pre-application (continued)

- Application's level of detail – need enough for finding of reasonable assurance of adequate protection.
- For the environmental review:
 - Align on whether the licensee/applicant will be the non-federal designee for Endangered Species Act consultations, if applicable.
 - Engage early with Tribes or other consulting parties, when appropriate.
 - Discuss consultation data needs, required permits from other parties, and site selection process.
- Set up a licensee/applicant-controlled portal to provide non-docketed information for NRC review and submit a portal agreement to the NRC.



Licensing best practices workshop: Pre-application (continued)

ANY ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES FOR PRE-APPLICATION?



Licensing best practices workshop: Submittal of an application

- Amendment requests should include the technical basis of the requested change:
 - The licensee/applicant should clearly describe, in sufficient detail, the change and basis for the change. If relying on previous approvals, clearly state which changes are based on which previous approvals.
 - For amendments and for applications based on previous licenses, a crosswalk or redline strikeout of changes from the licensee/applicant is extremely helpful.
 - The licensee/applicant should provide the basis for a categorical exclusion from an environmental review, if applicable. For example, if the intention is to use 10 CFR 51.22(c)(11), explain how each provision of that paragraph is met.



Licensing best practices workshop: Submittal of an application (continued)

- The licensee/applicant should perform a “quality check” to catch math errors, typos, incorrect references, etc.
- An exemption is needed to bifurcate the safety and environmental submittals. The exemption would have an expiration date (e.g., 6 months after the first part is submitted).
- Transmittal of an application:
 - Electronic submission is available.
 - Email a courtesy copy (or ADAMS ML#) to NRC Project Manager.



Licensing best practices workshop: Submittal of an application (continued)

ANY ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES FOR
SUBMITTAL?



Licensing best practices workshop:

Acceptance review

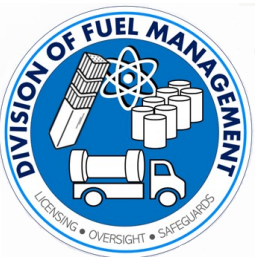
- Robust pre-application engagement can reduce acceptance review resources and the need for requests for supplemental information (RSIs).
- 60-days is a tight metric for acceptance reviews:
 - Allows 2 weeks for NRC staff to identify holes, 1 month for applicant response, and 2 weeks for NRC staff to confirm submittal is acceptable.
 - Pausing acceptance timeline may be needed for RSIs that require significant revision.
- Hold clarification calls to reduce the number of RSIs. When information is needed on the docket, frame the requests as easy to answer confirmatory questions, if possible, to reduce the level of effort in responding.



Licensing best practices workshop:

Acceptance review (continued)

- The NRC's acceptance letter should include:
 - Schedule, including key milestones, and estimated resources;
 - Key assumptions and expectations for the licensee/applicant to maintain the schedule; and
 - Observations from the acceptance review that may turn into RAIs to allow applicant to resolve potential RAIs early.
- All licensing actions require a notification of opportunity for hearing. When appropriate, the NRC should post these opportunities on its public website (<https://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/regulatory/adjudicatory/hearing-license-applications/licensing-actions-10cfrparts40-70-updated-monthly.html>) instead of issuing a Federal Register Notice.



Licensing best practices workshop: Acceptance review (continued)

ANY ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES FOR
ACCEPTANCE REVIEW?



Licensing best practices workshop:

Technical review

- A detailed draft safety evaluation report (SER) – an internal NRC document – is used to develop NRC's RAIs, which are always based upon a regulatory requirement. RAI responses are intended to fill a gap in the draft SER and are needed for the NRC staff to make its finding.
- Generic timeframe for response to RAIs is 30 days:
 - This should be from date draft RAIs are provided to shorten review timelines, if licensee/applicant can meet that date.
 - Clarification calls should be requested within 3 business days of receiving draft RAIs and scheduled within one week following the request.
 - Request a call on draft responses for complex RAIs to reduce follow-up RAIs and requests for supplement.



Licensing best practices workshop:

Technical review (continued)

- NRC staff should use audits and clarification calls to facilitate review of complex issues (e.g., onsite ISA reviews).
- NRC staff should use requests for confirmatory information (RCIs), that require a simple response, when possible.
- RAIs should clearly explain the safety significance of the issue and why the NRC is asking for the information. The NRC staff should provide sufficient context so that the licensee/applicant understands why the information is being asked for and how to appropriately respond.
- To resolve disagreements on how to address an RAI, the licensee/applicant should explain any adverse situations they are trying to avoid so that the NRC can help identify solutions that would still assure safety.
- The NRC's scope of review must be clearly documented in the SER, especially when a license amendment request includes associated changes under 10 CFR 70.72, which do not require prior NRC approval.



Licensing best practices workshop: Technical review (continued)

ANY ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES FOR
TECHNICAL REVIEW?



Licensing best practices workshop:

Issuance

- The NRC is no longer sending paper copies of licenses. NMSS/DFM/FFLB is using email and encryption of sensitive info.
- Agreed upon license conditions may be necessary for specific safety/security commitments and/or operational readiness review.



Licensing best practices workshop: Issuance (continued)

ANY ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES FOR
ISSUANCE?



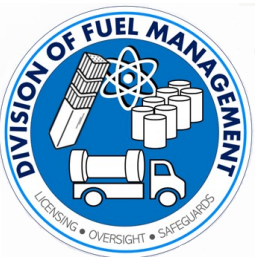
Additional feedback on potential improvements?

- On April 10, 2025, a public meeting was held to discuss potential improvements for licensing fuel facilities being considered under the NRC's efforts on Materials Licensing Efficiencies and Processes (M-LEAP).
- Topics that were discussed:
 - 4 categories/initiatives (pre-application activities, licensing action reviews, communication and guidance, internal NRC processes);
 - 3 prioritizations (near-term, mid-term, long-term); and
 - 76 potential improvements/actions.



Additional feedback on potential improvements? (continued)

ANY ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK?



Conclusion

ANY FINAL QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

