

SUMMARY OF MARCH 23, 2009 MEETING TO DISCUSS PROPOSED REGULATORY ISSUE SUMMARY CONCERNING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE NRC AND REACTOR LICENSEES DURING EMERGENCIES AND SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff developed a Regulatory Issue Summary (RIS) to address emergency communications between the NRC and reactor licensees. The purpose of the public meeting was to discuss the intent and structure of the document with industry and other stakeholders. A draft RIS was enclosed with the public meeting notice to inform stakeholders of the current language. Several comments and questions were provided by industry stakeholders regarding the proposed RIS. The comments and questions are included below:

Intent of the Document

NEI agreed with the purpose and usefulness of the RIS, but identified some wording that may have unintended consequences. NEI questioned the format of the current draft of the RIS and suggested that the executive and security-related communications details be split into two distinct sections or that each topic be published as a separate RIS.

NEI also recommended changing the description of the current RIS, as supplementing RIS 2002-16, "Current Incident Response Issues." While both RISs refer to emergency communications between the NRC and reactor licensees, NEI stated that the information included in the proposed RIS does not supplement RIS 2002-16, but rather clarifies a specific piece of emergency communications, different than the information provided in RIS 2002-16.

Industry stated that the "Intent" section was unclear because it provided no context as to when the discussed emergency communications would take place. NEI recommended that an explanation be provided as to when executive and security-related communications would likely occur.

Discussion on "Communication with the NRC Executive Team Director"

NEI suggested that the term "authorized" be removed from the reference to the licensee's representative and provided some minor additional clarifying language.

Discussion on "Communication of Security-Related Information"

Industry recommended that this section include recognition that the Safeguards Information phone inside the NRC Resident's Office may not be located within the protected area. This section also referenced the "bases for the licensees responses required by 10 CFR 50.72 (c)(2)." The NRC determined that it did not need this request for bases information in this RIS and this language was removed.

Tabletop

Industry encouraged the NRC to conduct a tabletop drill to practice executive and security-related communications, specifically the questions presented in Tables 1 and 2 of the RIS. The NRC will conduct a tabletop for this purpose in the next few months. The tabletop will address the bases for the questions noted in the RIS to provide licensees with an understanding as to their intent and the reasons for asking the questions.