

NOTATION VOTE

RESPONSE SHEET

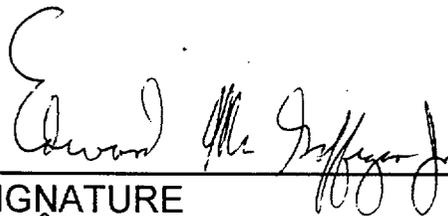
TO: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary
FROM: COMMISSIONER MCGAFFIGAN
SUBJECT: SECY-00-0035 - PUBLIC CONFIDENCE SURVEY

Approved _____ Disapproved Abstain _____

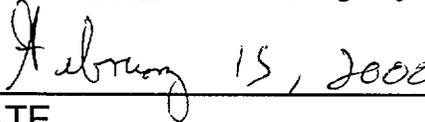
Not Participating _____

COMMENTS:

See attached comments.



SIGNATURE



DATE

Entered on "STARS" Yes No _____

Commissioner McGaffigan's Comments on SECY-00-0035

I appreciate that the staff has struggled with the issue of public confidence surveys, and I commend the staff for a frank discussion of options. I do not approve the staff recommendation to use the ACSI technique to provide a baseline measure of public confidence in various unnamed segments of the public (option 2). For the reasons discussed below I approve instead option 3.

I have often been critical of various efforts to design a public confidence meter since this notion first came up last year. Our mission is public health and safety. Obviously our ability to carry out our mission is enhanced if the public has confidence in us. We earn that confidence, both staff and Commission, by interacting with the public and addressing their issues. I will always remember David Lochbaum's letter to the Commission about our Millstone 3 restart decision. He told us that he disagreed with our decision, but could not fault the open and transparent process through which the Commission engaged the public and arrived at its decision. That is the model which the Commission and staff need to follow in addressing the issues before us.

We get feedback, both external and internal, about our programs and processes all the time. It is perhaps not systematic, but neither is the proposed survey of unnamed segments of the public. In one example of a proposed survey, the survey would "determine the public's views on the information contained in and ease of use of the NRC's Web site." Why would such a survey at \$35,000, one third of an FTE, provide any better information than simply compiling and acting on feedback received through the feedback feature on the Web page (NRCWEB@NRC.GOV)? Perhaps that feedback feature could be enhanced by including on the web page a discussion of web page improvement initiatives and a request for comments on whether we are on the right track. We know today many of the problems with our web site. Wouldn't 1/3 of an FTE be better invested in fixing the problems than conducting surveys that will tell us what we already know?

We could get feedback for another \$35,000 from the public on our 2.206 petition process through a survey. But we already have that information and are trying to redesign the process in light of the feedback. Any feedback would likely be out of date by the time we received it. Again, I would invest in improving the process, not in a \$35,000 survey.

In general, I have a hard time imagining what useful information I will get from these segment surveys, each at the cost of 1/3 of an FTE, that we don't already have.

I favor instead option 3 (without the expense of hiring a contractor), because it will bring about "a more publicly visible and documented approach to solicit, collect, evaluate," but most important, "provide responses" to feedback from the public, all segments of the public. Neither industry nor public interest groups nor other stakeholders (States, etc.) expect us to agree with them on every matter they raise. But they do expect us to explain reasonably promptly why we either agree or disagree. Their frustration is greatest when their feedback simply is not responded to. I recognize that option 3 will give us feedback for "only a small segment of stakeholders" with "specific interests and/or issues to discuss." But that is likely the most important feedback for our regulatory programs and processes. Artificially extending this to capture other segments of 250 people, such as those in the EPZ of a power plant (which plant?, how representative? what effect on programs?) at the cost of \$35K for each 250 person sample makes no sense to me.

