

No. 93-121
Tel. 301/504-2240

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Wednesday, September 1, 1993)

NRC SPECIAL REVIEW TEAM TO HOLD FOUR PUBLIC
MEETINGS ON WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION PROGRAM

A special review team of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has scheduled four public meetings in September and October to obtain the views of licensees, their employees and other concerned individuals, including individuals who have made safety allegations, on the NRC's whistleblower protection program.

The special Review Team for Reassessment of the NRC Program for Protecting Allegers Against Retaliation was established after a report, issued on July 9 by the Office of the NRC Inspector General, concluded that the current NRC process for handling allegations of retaliation does not provide an adequate level of protection for whistleblowers. When its work is concluded, the special review team is to report to the Commission on its findings.

Four meeting locations have been chosen for their proximity to NRC-licensed nuclear facilities from which the NRC has received a number of whistleblower complaints in the past. One morning and one evening session will be held at each location to permit participation by interested individuals regardless of their work schedule.

Meetings have been scheduled for:

-- Bay City Texas, Matagorda Hotel, 407 7th Street:
September 20, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., and September 21, 9:00 a.m. to 12 Noon.

-- Phoenix, Arizona, Embassy Suites, 3210 Grand Avenue:
September 28, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and September 29, 9:00 a.m. to 12 Noon.

-- New London, Connecticut, Radisson Hotel, 35 Governor Winthrop Boulevard: October 7, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and October 8, 9:00 a.m. to 12 Noon.

-- Cleveland, Tennessee, Cleveland State Community College, Student Center, Foundation Room, Adkisson Drive: October 13, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and October 14, 9:00 a.m. to 12 Noon.

Individuals who wish to participate are not being asked to give advance notice but it is being suggested that they prepare their comments in advance to make the meetings more efficient. A sign-in sheet will be provided at each morning and evening meeting for those who wish to make a presentation. The amount of time available for individual comments will depend on the number of interested participants at a given meeting. Several NRC licensees have been asked to make short presentations at the morning meetings.

Some members of the special review team will attend each meeting but will not offer NRC positions on specific cases. The review team is seeking specific views on what past or future approaches have been or would be effective in fostering work environments in which individuals can raise safety concerns without fear of retaliation.

Participants also are being asked to focus on a number of specific questions published in the Federal Register on August 2 that concern the NRC whistleblower protection program.

#