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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENCY'S  
STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is requesting public comment on the second phase of a critical evaluation known as strategic assessment and rebaselining of its regulatory activities.

During the week of September 16, 1996, documents dealing with the strategic assessment are being made available to the public and several public conferences will be held around the country.

Initiated in September last year by Chairman Shirley Ann Jackson, the NRC assessment and rebaselining of its activities is intended to provide a sound foundation for the agency's direction and decision-making for the rest of this decade and into the next. This initiative has four phases: Phase I-Strategic Assessment, Phase II-Rebaselining and Development of Decision Papers, Phase III-Production of a Strategic Plan, and Phase IV-Implementation.

In the first phase a steering committee made up of senior agency managers, working with an outside consultant, reviewed the NRC's activities in order to understand where the NRC is today, and what needs to be considered in providing options for responding to change.

Some of the key objectives identified by the steering committee are:

- o Establish a strategic framework under which the NRC will continue to meet its primary responsibility of protecting public health and safety and the environment.

- o Provide a sound and well-rounded foundation for the NRC's direction and decision-making for the rest of this decade and into the next century.

- o Ensure that the Commission, its staff, Congress, other Government agencies, and the public have a common understanding of what the NRC's strategic goals are.

o Establish agency performance measures to determine the extent to which strategic or tactical objectives are being achieved.

The second phase builds on strategic issues identified in Phase I. For key strategic issues, papers have been developed containing policy options for Commission consideration. Before reaching final decisions on the issues, the Commission wants to have the benefit of stakeholders views--those who will be affected by the decisions.

Three documents are available to help the public with making comments: 1) a stakeholder involvement process paper, 2) a set of direction-setting papers on 16 issues with Commission preliminary views on each, and 3) a strategic planning framework paper which explains how the issues relate to the strategic plan and how the plan will be developed.

Copies of the three documents can be obtained electronically from the NRC's Home Page on the World Wide Web (Internet address <http://www.nrc.gov>) and FedWorld at 1-800-303-9672. Paper copies are available by calling NRC's Public Document Room at 1-800-397-4209.

In addition to NRC employees, stakeholders asked to comment on the NRC strategic plan include Federal entities (the Administration/Office of Management and Budget, Congress and other agencies), Agreement States, non-Agreement States, NRC licensees and their employees, nuclear industry groups, public interest groups, and the general public.

The NRC will hold three public conferences to discuss the issue papers and to obtain comments from stakeholders. The conference dates and locations are:

October 24-25, Washington, DC--Washington Hilton;  
October 31-November 1, Colorado Springs, CO--Sheraton Hotel;  
November 7-8, Chicago, IL--the Ramada O'Hare.

Additional information on times and locations of the conferences is available via Internet (<http://www.nrc.gov>), FedWorld, or by calling NRC's public meeting recorded announcement system at 1-800-952-9674.

To help understand their viewpoints, stakeholders are asked to focus on the following in responding to the NRC:

1. What, if any, important considerations may have been omitted from the issue papers?

2. How accurate are the NRC's assumptions and projections for internal and external factors discussed in the issue papers?

3. Do the Commission's preliminary views associated with each issue paper respond to the current environment and challenges?

Additionally, the Commission is seeking comments on specific questions identified in the "Preliminary Commission View" section of each issue paper.

The comment period on the issue papers closes November 15. Comments can be provided in writing, electronically, or at the public conferences. Comments may be sent by e-mail to internet:SECY@NRC.gov or to Mr. John C. Hoyle, Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Chief of Docketing and Services Branch, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

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