

No. 92-135
Tel. 301/504-2240

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Wednesday, September 23, 1992)

NRC ISSUES POLICY STATEMENT ENCOURAGING USE
OF INTEGRATED SCHEDULES FOR MEETING REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Final Policy Statement supporting the use of integrated schedules for completing regulatory requirements and other activities at NRC-licensed nuclear power plants. It describes the way licensees may establish realistic integrated schedules and the way the Commission intends to interact with those licensees who voluntarily use them.

Utilities licensed to operate seven nuclear power plants already have implemented integrated schedules and the experience to date shows that the process has generally benefitted both the licensees and the NRC. Most use a two or three-tier approach with the first tier being NRC rules and the other tiers consisting of commitments in response to NRC Generic Letters and Bulletins, significant actions to resolve items from NRC inspection reports and licensee event reports and, finally, licensee-initiated projects. Normally, all activities above a certain threshold (such as number of person-hour or cost) are included in the integrated schedule.

The Final Policy Statement points out that the Commission believes that the implementation of integrated schedules on a plant-specific basis will provide a systematic method of coordinating, managing and scheduling major modifications and activities initiated both by the NRC and licensees, could enhance timely compliance with regulatory requirements and accommodate licensee-initiated activities and provide a major benefit in its flexibility to assign or reassign resources in recognition of safety significance.

It also outlines the major elements of an integrated scheduling program in which the prioritization methodology, the schedule and periodic schedule updates would be determined by the licensee and submitted to the NRC for review. The major elements of such a program would include:

-- A systematic process for identifying and defining those activities to be scheduled;

-- A process for prioritizing and a process for scheduling the individual actions, taking into account such factors as safety, plant availability, radiation exposure, procurement requirements and cost;

-- A plan for maintaining and updating implementation schedules;

-- A provision for NRC review of the prioritization and scheduling process, the initial schedule and updates;

-- A provision for requesting schedular relief from NRC-initiated schedules; and

-- A process for evaluating a licensee's maintenance of schedules through the issuance of periodic reports on actions completed, schedules for new actions or implementation problems.

The Final Policy Statement on Integrated Schedules will become effective on November 23, 1992.

#