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NRC STAFF INITIATES INTEGRATED MATERIALS
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROGRAM

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will begin a pilot program this month using a common method to assess the performance of its five regional offices and 29 states, called Agreement States, which regulate uses of certain radioactive materials in industrial, medical, educational and other applications.

The Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP) will be conducted using programmatic indicators and other "operational" data, as well as indicators unique to the particular program being reviewed. The programmatic indicators include the status of inspection, technical staffing and training, technical quality of licensing actions, technical quality of inspections and response to incidents and allegations. The operational data to be gathered include medical misadministrations of radioactive materials to patients in the practice of medicine, lost or abandoned radioactive materials, radiation overexposures and contaminated sites.

This program was developed in response to the issues raised in a General Accounting Office report published in April 1993 titled, "Better Criteria and Data Would Help Ensure Safety of Nuclear Material." In testimony before the House Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on Environment, Energy and Natural Resources on August 2, 1993, Chairman Selin noted that NRC would "...use these indicators as a basis for an annual discussion with the Organization of Agreement States, present the results at the NRC senior management meeting in June of each year, and brief the Commission annually at a public meeting."

The pilot program will begin in NRC's regional office near Philadelphia to be followed by the regional office in Atlanta and two or more Agreement States. For Agreement States, NRC's program reviews will be conducted using existing procedures and additional information on the common performance indicators will be gathered for the pilot program. The results will be reported to the Commission once the pilot is complete and further revisions to the program will be identified at that time.

Comments on the proposed program were received from the Agreement States and the NRC Regions.

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