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NRC PUBLISHES STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS ON STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT
OF REGULATORY ACTIVITIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has published a report summarizing comments received from the public, the nuclear industry, its own staff, and other interested parties on its strategic assessment and rebaselining initiative. The report caps the second phase of the agency's strategic assessment initiative launched by Chairman Shirley Ann Jackson last year in an effort to provide a solid foundation for the agency's direction and decision-making as it prepares for the 21st Century.

In the first phase of the strategic assessment initiative, the senior agency managers examined the activities and functions of the agency as well as internal and external factors or impacts. During the second phase, papers were developed which outlined major issues identified in Phase I, along with options for Commission consideration in dealing with those issues. Before reaching final decisions on those issues, the Commission sought stakeholder views so that these views could be considered as the Commission made final decisions on major issues that would form the bases of the NRC's Strategic Plan. The NRC held several meetings with the NRC staff, and three public conferences -- in Washington, D.C., Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Chicago, Illinois -- to discuss the issue papers and obtain comments from interested parties or stakeholders. Comments were received on all 16 issue papers.

The Stakeholder Interaction Report summarizes and highlights significant comments. Comments reflected a wide range of views.

Some general observations made in the report include:

- The demonstrated safety record of the nuclear industry should not be minimized or lost. Commenters were concerned that the issues discussed in the issue papers and the strategic assessment and rebaselining initiative could be perceived as something that was required because the current regulatory process was broken or failed to insure safety;

- The meetings provided an opportunity for NRC's stakeholders to discuss issues and gain a better understanding of each other's perspectives;
- Non-industry stakeholders believe that NRC should view the public, not the nuclear industry, as its primary customer;
- A more consistent regulatory approach among various issues is needed.

In addition to the summary and discussion in the report, copies of all comments and transcripts of the public meetings will be considered by the Commission in reaching final decisions.

In Phase III of the strategic assessment initiative, a strategic plan will be developed based on the agency's mission, general goals, and the Commission's decisions on the issue papers. Phase IV will implement the strategic plan and integrate it into the agency's budget, performance monitoring, and Commission decision processes.

Copies of the Stakeholder Interaction Report are available electronically on NRC's home page at <http://www.nrc.gov> and on FedWorld at 1-800-303-9672. Paper copies are available by calling NRC's Public Document Room, 1-800-397-4209.

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