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COMMISSION PUBLISHES 'WHITE PAPER' REPORT
ON RISK-INFORMED, PERFORMANCE-BASED REGULATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a "white paper" special report outlining its expectations regarding the "risk-informed" and "performance-based" regulation of nuclear safety.

The report defines these and other related terms in an effort to promote a more common understanding within the NRC and its regulated community, as well as by the public, as to how risk-informed and performance-based concepts apply to various agency functions.

The NRC has been moving for some time to a more risk-informed regulatory framework, in which the regulator uses the insights from probabilistic risk assessments (PRAs) and other risk assessment methods to place the greatest emphasis on those areas of greatest risk to the public.

A Commission policy statement adopted in August 1995 formalized the agency's commitment to achieving that goal through the expanded use of PRAs and other techniques that quantify and rank risk. This risk-informed focus is supplemented by performance-based regulatory oversight, which emphasizes measurable results over process and method, and thus, in some areas, can allow for greater regulatory flexibility in application.

The text of the white paper, "Risk-Informed and Performance-Based Regulation" is posted on the NRC Internet web page at:
<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/COMMISSION/POLICY/whitepr.html>.

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