

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, DC 20555  
Phone 301-415-8200 Fax 301-415-2234  
Internet:opa@nrc.gov

No. 96-26

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
(Tuesday, February 6, 1996)

NRC ISSUES FINAL REPORT ON IMPROVING  
ITS RESPONSIVENESS TO THE PUBLIC

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a final report on its plans for improving the agency's responsiveness to the public. These plans were developed in response to the National Performance Review's new emphasis on "placing the customer first."

A draft report was published for comment last March. Public comments on the draft indicated the NRC is moving in the right direction in providing greater accessibility to its activities.

The final report spells out improvements for serving the public in mission-related areas, such as rulemaking, emergency preparedness, management of allegations, materials licensing, Agreement States and decommissioning. Administrative improvements focus on areas such as contracting, correspondence, electronic information, public meeting notices and responses to license fee inquiries.

It has been a long-standing policy of the NRC to conduct its activities in an open and public manner. The public includes individual citizens, public interest groups, petitioners, industry groups, the Congress, and licensees.

Copies of the final report, "Responsiveness to the Public," NUREG/BR-0199, may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 37082, Washington, DC 20402-9328 and the National Technical Information Service, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161. Additionally, the report is available through the Internet World Wide Web server, which can be accessed by using the Uniform Resource Locator, (URL)<http://www.nrc.gov>. A copy is available for inspection and/or copying for a fee at the NRC Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW, Washington, DC.

In a separate effort to improve the agency's responsiveness to the nuclear industry, the Commission last July endorsed a policy statement on maintaining open lines of communication

between the NRC staff and licensees. The Commission recognized "that honest, well-intentioned differences" of opinion between the staff and a licensee will occasionally occur" and encouraged open communications for constructive and prompt resolution. A recent industry report suggested that licensees were reluctant to report allegedly inappropriate regulatory action by NRC employees out of fear of retaliation. The Commission made clear it "will not tolerate inappropriate regulatory actions . . . or the threat of retaliation against those licensees who communicate concerns to the agency."

#