



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

PDR

May 3, 2000

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable James M. Inhofe, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Clean Air, Wetlands,  
Private Property and Nuclear Safety  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 106-58 and House Report 106-253, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the Fiscal Year 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. As further directed in House Report 106-253, we have expanded the monthly report to include regulatory reform efforts affecting power reactor operations beyond 10 CFR Part 50, particularly NRC efforts to harmonize NRC security regulations with Part 50. We have also expanded the monthly report to include the status of all license renewal applications that are under active review and other NRC initiatives in developing implementation guidance for the license renewal rule. I am pleased to transmit the sixteenth report, which covers the month of March (Enclosure 1).

I would like to update you on four significant items of interest we called to your attention in last month's report. The first item concerned the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant steam generator tube failure. As you know, there has been substantial public and Congressional interest in this event. The Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition to the NRC asking that the NRC require ConEd to replace the four steam generators prior to allowing restart. The NRC has accepted this matter for review. Information about this petition is available on the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>), and we will inform you of the results of the NRC decision as soon as it is available. In general, the NRC sets minimum requirements that must be met by ConEd to assure protection of public health and safety. The NRC will oversee ConEd's steam generator tube inspections, repairs, and other corrective actions to assure these public health and safety requirements are met. The NRC will not approve restart until ConEd demonstrates these specific requirements have been met.

There is no change in the status of the second item, which concerned the deferral of the Commission decision on the relocation of the NRC Technical Training Center (TTC) from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the NRC headquarters area. The General Accounting Office study on the merits of the move is ongoing, and the Commission will not act until it has had an opportunity to consider any GAO recommendations. We will inform you of our conclusions.

DF02

The third item concerned the Commission approval of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application. Since the February report, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission acted properly in granting 20 more years of operating life to the twin-reactor plant. The Commission was pleased with the Court's decision. We have maintained throughout the proceeding that the National Whistleblower Center's case was without merit, and we are pleased that the Court has sustained our position on that matter. Having said that, let me assure you that the Commission welcomes public involvement in license renewal or other agency actions, either through the Commission's adjudicatory or administrative processes. Such involvement must, however, follow our rules.

The fourth item concerned the initial implementation of NRC's revised reactor oversight process (RROP) at all commercial nuclear power plants (with the exception of D.C. Cook due to its extended shutdown), which became effective on April 2. As we come to the end of the first month of the RROP, performance indicator data for the first quarter of calendar year 2000 has been received from all plants and will be available on NRC's website in the near future. No significant issues or concerns with RROP have emerged since its implementation earlier this month.

The February report also provided information on a number of significant NRC activities. These activities included the submittal of formal comments to the Department of Energy on its draft environmental impact statement for possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the absence of any significant computer problems experienced by NRC and its licensees arising from the February 29, 2000, leap year transition; and receipt of two additional license renewal applications, bringing the total number of license renewal applications under active NRC review to three, which involve six operating nuclear power plants (Oconee 1, 2 and 3; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1; and Hatch 1 and 2).

During this reporting period, NRC staff conducted its 12<sup>th</sup> Regulatory Information Conference. This annual conference, which had over a thousand attendees, brings together NRC, its licensees, representatives from the international commercial nuclear power community, and other interested stakeholders and provides a forum for the exchange of information about important matters facing the nuclear power industry and the NRC. Also, on March 20, the Commission published a final rule that added the Transnuclear TN-32 dry cask system to the list of approved dry cask storage systems for the storage of spent fuel. Approval of this final rule provides NRC licensees additional flexibility in managing the handling and storage of spent fuel generated by their reactor operations.

Since our February report, the Commission and the NRC staff also:

- jointly submitted with the Department of Labor, proposed language to Congress to amend the Energy Reorganization Act to further protect nuclear industry employees from retaliation by their employers for raising safety issues. The proposed language would set more realistic time limits for steps in the adjudicatory process and specify explicit time frames for steps for which no time limits are currently provided.
- forwarded for Commission approval the staff's review of the Oconee Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application and recommendation to authorize renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 for an additional twenty years. The staff briefed

the Commission on its review and recommendation in a public meeting scheduled for May 2.

- issued the safety evaluation report (SER) for the ABB "Crossflow" measuring system topical report. The increased accuracy of the Crossflow measuring system can be used to support a reduction in the power level margin used in the plant emergency core cooling system (ECCS) evaluations. In turn, licensees can submit a license amendment to operate the power plant at higher power levels. With issuance of the ABB Crossflow SER, licensees seeking such license amendments now have a choice between two vendor designs.

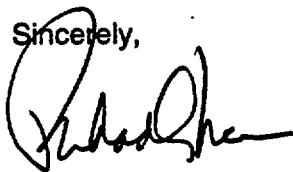
In a related matter, the staff submitted for Commission approval a final rule that amends 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, "ECCS Evaluation Models." The amendment will facilitate small but cost-beneficial power uprates for commercial nuclear power plants seeking to utilize the improved feedwater flow measurement systems discussed above. While all plants could conceivably benefit from this risk-informed rulemaking, if only 50 plant licensees pursue a marginal power uprate, they would share an annual benefit ranging from \$50 million to \$135 million.

- issued a performance review report for the Westinghouse commercial fuel fabrication facility located near Columbia, South Carolina. The report indicates that performance at the plant generally has improved since the agency's last review, but that certain radiological criticality safety controls and controls for the measurement of uranium being processed, mentioned in the plant's 1998 performance review, continue to need improvement, along with adherence to requirements for nuclear material shipping containers.
- completed public workshops, attended by representatives from utilities, industry, States, NRC, and members of the public, in each of the four NRC regions. The workshops provided information about the key attributes of the new oversight process.
- conducted a public workshop to explain and obtain stakeholder views on the Revision of the Oversight Program for Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facilities.
- conducted a public workshop on industry implementation of the revised Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, concentrating on: (1) potential overlapping requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 and 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) shutdown risk management issues, and (3) the RROP.
- conducted an April 4 public meeting with stakeholders on the environmental review related to the application of Entergy Operations, Inc., to renew its operating license for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1. The meeting was held in Russellville, Arkansas, and provided a forum for members of the public to comment on environmental issues NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

I have enclosed (Enclosure 2) the March update to the Tasking Memorandum which delineates the specific initiatives completed by the agency since August 1998 and future milestones.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Meserve", written in a cursive style.

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosures:

1. March Monthly Report
2. Tasking Memorandum

cc: Senator Bob Graham



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 3, 2000

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Joe Barton, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Energy and Power  
Committee on Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 106-58 and House Report 106-253, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the Fiscal Year 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. As further directed in House Report 106-253, we have expanded the monthly report to include regulatory reform efforts affecting power reactor operations beyond 10 CFR Part 50, particularly NRC efforts to harmonize NRC security regulations with Part 50. We have also expanded the monthly report to include the status of all license renewal applications that are under active review and other NRC initiatives in developing implementation guidance for the license renewal rule. I am pleased to transmit the sixteenth report, which covers the month of March (Enclosure 1).

I would like to update you on four significant items of interest we called to your attention in last month's report. The first item concerned the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant steam generator tube failure. As you know, there has been substantial public and Congressional interest in this event. The Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition to the NRC asking that the NRC require ConEd to replace the four steam generators prior to allowing restart. The NRC has accepted this matter for review. Information about this petition is available on the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>), and we will inform you of the results of the NRC decision as soon as it is available. In general, the NRC sets minimum requirements that must be met by ConEd to assure protection of public health and safety. The NRC will oversee ConEd's steam generator tube inspections, repairs, and other corrective actions to assure these public health and safety requirements are met. The NRC will not approve restart until ConEd demonstrates these specific requirements have been met.

There is no change in the status of the second item, which concerned the deferral of the Commission decision on the relocation of the NRC Technical Training Center (TTC) from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the NRC headquarters area. The General Accounting Office study on the merits of the move is ongoing, and the Commission will not act until it has had an opportunity to consider any GAO recommendations. We will inform you of our conclusions.

The third item concerned the Commission approval of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application. Since the February report, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission acted properly in granting 20 more years of operating life to the twin-reactor plant. The Commission was pleased with the Court's decision. We have maintained throughout the proceeding that the National Whistleblower Center's case was without merit, and we are pleased that the Court has sustained our position on that matter. Having said that, let me assure you that the Commission welcomes public involvement in license renewal or other agency actions, either through the Commission's adjudicatory or administrative processes. Such involvement must, however, follow our rules.

The fourth item concerned the initial implementation of NRC's revised reactor oversight process (RROP) at all commercial nuclear power plants (with the exception of D.C. Cook due to its extended shutdown), which became effective on April 2. As we come to the end of the first month of the RROP, performance indicator data for the first quarter of calendar year 2000 has been received from all plants and will be available on NRC's website in the near future. No significant issues or concerns with RROP have emerged since its implementation earlier this month.

The February report also provided information on a number of significant NRC activities. These activities included the submittal of formal comments to the Department of Energy on its draft environmental impact statement for possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the absence of any significant computer problems experienced by NRC and its licensees arising from the February 29, 2000, leap year transition; and receipt of two additional license renewal applications, bringing the total number of license renewal applications under active NRC review to three, which involve six operating nuclear power plants (Oconee 1, 2 and 3; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1; and Hatch 1 and 2).

During this reporting period, NRC staff conducted its 12<sup>th</sup> Regulatory Information Conference. This annual conference, which had over a thousand attendees, brings together NRC, its licensees, representatives from the international commercial nuclear power community, and other interested stakeholders and provides a forum for the exchange of information about important matters facing the nuclear power industry and the NRC. Also, on March 20, the Commission published a final rule that added the Transnuclear TN-32 dry cask system to the list of approved dry cask storage systems for the storage of spent fuel. Approval of this final rule provides NRC licensees additional flexibility in managing the handling and storage of spent fuel generated by their reactor operations.

Since our February report, the Commission and the NRC staff also:

- jointly submitted with the Department of Labor, proposed language to Congress to amend the Energy Reorganization Act to further protect nuclear industry employees from retaliation by their employers for raising safety issues. The proposed language would set more realistic time limits for steps in the adjudicatory process and specify explicit time frames for steps for which no time limits are currently provided.
- forwarded for Commission approval the staff's review of the Oconee Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application and recommendation to authorize renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 for an additional twenty years. The staff briefed

the Commission on its review and recommendation in a public meeting scheduled for May 2.

- issued the safety evaluation report (SER) for the ABB "Crossflow" measuring system topical report. The increased accuracy of the Crossflow measuring system can be used to support a reduction in the power level margin used in the plant emergency core cooling system (ECCS) evaluations. In turn, licensees can submit a license amendment to operate the power plant at higher power levels. With issuance of the ABB Crossflow SER, licensees seeking such license amendments now have a choice between two vendor designs.


In a related matter, the staff submitted for Commission approval a final rule that amends 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, "ECCS Evaluation Models." The amendment will facilitate small but cost-beneficial power uprates for commercial nuclear power plants seeking to utilize the improved feedwater flow measurement systems discussed above. While all plants could conceivably benefit from this risk-informed rulemaking, if only 50 plant licensees pursue a marginal power uprate, they would share an annual benefit ranging from \$50 million to \$135 million.

- issued a performance review report for the Westinghouse commercial fuel fabrication facility located near Columbia, South Carolina. The report indicates that performance at the plant generally has improved since the agency's last review, but that certain radiological criticality safety controls and controls for the measurement of uranium being processed, mentioned in the plant's 1998 performance review, continue to need improvement, along with adherence to requirements for nuclear material shipping containers.
- completed public workshops, attended by representatives from utilities, industry, States, NRC, and members of the public, in each of the four NRC regions. The workshops provided information about the key attributes of the new oversight process.
- conducted a public workshop to explain and obtain stakeholder views on the Revision of the Oversight Program for Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facilities.
- conducted a public workshop on industry implementation of the revised Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, concentrating on: (1) potential overlapping requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 and 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) shutdown risk management issues, and (3) the RROP.
- conducted an April 4 public meeting with stakeholders on the environmental review related to the application of Entergy Operations, Inc., to renew its operating license for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1. The meeting was held in Russellville, Arkansas, and provided a forum for members of the public to comment on environmental issues NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

I have enclosed (Enclosure 2) the March update to the Tasking Memorandum which delineates the specific initiatives completed by the agency since August 1998 and future milestones.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard A. Meserve', written in a cursive style.

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosures:

1. March Monthly Report
2. Tasking Memorandum

cc: Representative Rick Boucher





CHAIRMAN

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 3, 2000

The Honorable Tom Bliley, Chairman  
Committee on Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 106-58 and House Report 106-253, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the Fiscal Year 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. As further directed in House Report 106-253, we have expanded the monthly report to include regulatory reform efforts affecting power reactor operations beyond 10 CFR Part 50, particularly NRC efforts to harmonize NRC security regulations with Part 50. We have also expanded the monthly report to include the status of all license renewal applications that are under active review and other NRC initiatives in developing implementation guidance for the license renewal rule. I am pleased to transmit the sixteenth report, which covers the month of March (Enclosure 1).

I would like to update you on four significant items of interest we called to your attention in last month's report. The first item concerned the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant steam generator tube failure. As you know, there has been substantial public and Congressional interest in this event. The Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition to the NRC asking that the NRC require ConEd to replace the four steam generators prior to allowing restart. The NRC has accepted this matter for review. Information about this petition is available on the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>), and we will inform you of the results of the NRC decision as soon as it is available. In general, the NRC sets minimum requirements that must be met by ConEd to assure protection of public health and safety. The NRC will oversee ConEd's steam generator tube inspections, repairs, and other corrective actions to assure these public health and safety requirements are met. The NRC will not approve restart until ConEd demonstrates these specific requirements have been met.

There is no change in the status of the second item, which concerned the deferral of the Commission decision on the relocation of the NRC Technical Training Center (TTC) from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the NRC headquarters area. The General Accounting Office study on the merits of the move is ongoing, and the Commission will not act until it has had an opportunity to consider any GAO recommendations. We will inform you of our conclusions.

The third item concerned the Commission approval of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application. Since the February report, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission acted properly in granting 20 more years of operating life to the twin-reactor plant. The Commission was pleased with the Court's decision. We have maintained throughout the proceeding that the National Whistleblower Center's case was without merit, and we are pleased that the Court has sustained our position on that matter. Having said that, let me assure you that the Commission welcomes public involvement in license renewal or other agency actions, either through the Commission's adjudicatory or administrative processes. Such involvement must, however, follow our rules.

The fourth item concerned the initial implementation of NRC's revised reactor oversight process (RROP) at all commercial nuclear power plants (with the exception of D.C. Cook due to its extended shutdown), which became effective on April 2. As we come to the end of the first month of the RROP, performance indicator data for the first quarter of calendar year 2000 has been received from all plants and will be available on NRC's website in the near future. No significant issues or concerns with RROP have emerged since its implementation earlier this month.

The February report also provided information on a number of significant NRC activities. These activities included the submittal of formal comments to the Department of Energy on its draft environmental impact statement for possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the absence of any significant computer problems experienced by NRC and its licensees arising from the February 29, 2000, leap year transition; and receipt of two additional license renewal applications, bringing the total number of license renewal applications under active NRC review to three, which involve six operating nuclear power plants (Oconee 1, 2 and 3; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1; and Hatch 1 and 2).

During this reporting period, NRC staff conducted its 12<sup>th</sup> Regulatory Information Conference. This annual conference, which had over a thousand attendees, brings together NRC, its licensees, representatives from the international commercial nuclear power community, and other interested stakeholders and provides a forum for the exchange of information about important matters facing the nuclear power industry and the NRC. Also, on March 20, the Commission published a final rule that added the Transnuclear TN-32 dry cask system to the list of approved dry cask storage systems for the storage of spent fuel. Approval of this final rule provides NRC licensees additional flexibility in managing the handling and storage of spent fuel generated by their reactor operations.

Since our February report, the Commission and the NRC staff also:

- jointly submitted with the Department of Labor, proposed language to Congress to amend the Energy Reorganization Act to further protect nuclear industry employees from retaliation by their employers for raising safety issues. The proposed language would set more realistic time limits for steps in the adjudicatory process and specify explicit time frames for steps for which no time limits are currently provided.
- forwarded for Commission approval the staff's review of the Oconee Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application and recommendation to authorize renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 for an additional twenty years. The staff briefed

the Commission on its review and recommendation in a public meeting scheduled for May 2.

- issued the safety evaluation report (SER) for the ABB "Crossflow" measuring system topical report. The increased accuracy of the Crossflow measuring system can be used to support a reduction in the power level margin used in the plant emergency core cooling system (ECCS) evaluations. In turn, licensees can submit a license amendment to operate the power plant at higher power levels. With issuance of the ABB Crossflow SER, licensees seeking such license amendments now have a choice between two vendor designs.

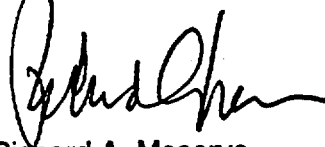
In a related matter, the staff submitted for Commission approval a final rule that amends 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, "ECCS Evaluation Models." The amendment will facilitate small but cost-beneficial power uprates for commercial nuclear power plants seeking to utilize the improved feedwater flow measurement systems discussed above. While all plants could conceivably benefit from this risk-informed rulemaking, if only 50 plant licensees pursue a marginal power uprate, they would share an annual benefit ranging from \$50 million to \$135 million.

- issued a performance review report for the Westinghouse commercial fuel fabrication facility located near Columbia, South Carolina. The report indicates that performance at the plant generally has improved since the agency's last review, but that certain radiological criticality safety controls and controls for the measurement of uranium being processed, mentioned in the plant's 1998 performance review, continue to need improvement, along with adherence to requirements for nuclear material shipping containers.
- completed public workshops, attended by representatives from utilities, industry, States, NRC, and members of the public, in each of the four NRC regions. The workshops provided information about the key attributes of the new oversight process.
- conducted a public workshop to explain and obtain stakeholder views on the Revision of the Oversight Program for Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facilities.
- conducted a public workshop on industry implementation of the revised Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, concentrating on: (1) potential overlapping requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 and 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) shutdown risk management issues, and (3) the RROP.
- conducted an April 4 public meeting with stakeholders on the environmental review related to the application of Entergy Operations, Inc., to renew its operating license for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1. The meeting was held in Russellville, Arkansas, and provided a forum for members of the public to comment on environmental issues NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

I have enclosed (Enclosure 2) the March update to the Tasking Memorandum which delineates the specific initiatives completed by the agency since August 1998 and future milestones.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Meserve", written in a cursive style.

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosures:

1. March Monthly Report
2. Tasking Memorandum

cc: Representative John D. Dingell



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 3, 2000

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Bob Smith, Chairman  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 106-58 and House Report 106-253, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the Fiscal Year 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. As further directed in House Report 106-253, we have expanded the monthly report to include regulatory reform efforts affecting power reactor operations beyond 10 CFR Part 50, particularly NRC efforts to harmonize NRC security regulations with Part 50. We have also expanded the monthly report to include the status of all license renewal applications that are under active review and other NRC initiatives in developing implementation guidance for the license renewal rule. I am pleased to transmit the sixteenth report, which covers the month of March (Enclosure 1).

I would like to update you on four significant items of interest we called to your attention in last month's report. The first item concerned the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant steam generator tube failure. As you know, there has been substantial public and Congressional interest in this event. The Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition to the NRC asking that the NRC require ConEd to replace the four steam generators prior to allowing restart. The NRC has accepted this matter for review. Information about this petition is available on the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>), and we will inform you of the results of the NRC decision as soon as it is available. In general, the NRC sets minimum requirements that must be met by ConEd to assure protection of public health and safety. The NRC will oversee ConEd's steam generator tube inspections, repairs, and other corrective actions to assure these public health and safety requirements are met. The NRC will not approve restart until ConEd demonstrates these specific requirements have been met.

There is no change in the status of the second item, which concerned the deferral of the Commission decision on the relocation of the NRC Technical Training Center (TTC) from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the NRC headquarters area. The General Accounting Office study on the merits of the move is ongoing, and the Commission will not act until it has had an opportunity to consider any GAO recommendations. We will inform you of our conclusions.

The third item concerned the Commission approval of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application. Since the February report, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission acted properly in granting 20 more years of operating life to the twin-reactor plant. The Commission was pleased with the Court's decision. We have maintained throughout the proceeding that the National Whistleblower Center's case was without merit, and we are pleased that the Court has sustained our position on that matter. Having said that, let me assure you that the Commission welcomes public involvement in license renewal or other agency actions, either through the Commission's adjudicatory or administrative processes. Such involvement must, however, follow our rules.

The fourth item concerned the initial implementation of NRC's revised reactor oversight process (RROP) at all commercial nuclear power plants (with the exception of D.C. Cook due to its extended shutdown), which became effective on April 2. As we come to the end of the first month of the RROP, performance indicator data for the first quarter of calendar year 2000 has been received from all plants and will be available on NRC's website in the near future. No significant issues or concerns with RROP have emerged since its implementation earlier this month.

The February report also provided information on a number of significant NRC activities. These activities included the submittal of formal comments to the Department of Energy on its draft environmental impact statement for possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the absence of any significant computer problems experienced by NRC and its licensees arising from the February 29, 2000, leap year transition; and receipt of two additional license renewal applications, bringing the total number of license renewal applications under active NRC review to three, which involve six operating nuclear power plants (Oconee 1, 2 and 3; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1; and Hatch 1 and 2).

During this reporting period, NRC staff conducted its 12<sup>th</sup> Regulatory Information Conference. This annual conference, which had over a thousand attendees, brings together NRC, its licensees, representatives from the international commercial nuclear power community, and other interested stakeholders and provides a forum for the exchange of information about important matters facing the nuclear power industry and the NRC. Also, on March 20, the Commission published a final rule that added the Transnuclear TN-32 dry cask system to the list of approved dry cask storage systems for the storage of spent fuel. Approval of this final rule provides NRC licensees additional flexibility in managing the handling and storage of spent fuel generated by their reactor operations.

Since our February report, the Commission and the NRC staff also:

- jointly submitted with the Department of Labor, proposed language to Congress to amend the Energy Reorganization Act to further protect nuclear industry employees from retaliation by their employers for raising safety issues. The proposed language would set more realistic time limits for steps in the adjudicatory process and specify explicit time frames for steps for which no time limits are currently provided.
- forwarded for Commission approval the staff's review of the Oconee Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application and recommendation to authorize renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 for an additional twenty years. The staff briefed

the Commission on its review and recommendation in a public meeting scheduled for May 2.

- issued the safety evaluation report (SER) for the ABB "Crossflow" measuring system topical report. The increased accuracy of the Crossflow measuring system can be used to support a reduction in the power level margin used in the plant emergency core cooling system (ECCS) evaluations. In turn, licensees can submit a license amendment to operate the power plant at higher power levels. With issuance of the ABB Crossflow SER, licensees seeking such license amendments now have a choice between two vendor designs.

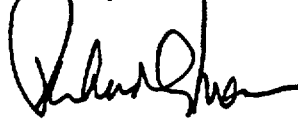
In a related matter, the staff submitted for Commission approval a final rule that amends 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, "ECCS Evaluation Models." The amendment will facilitate small but cost-beneficial power uprates for commercial nuclear power plants seeking to utilize the improved feedwater flow measurement systems discussed above. While all plants could conceivably benefit from this risk-informed rulemaking, if only 50 plant licensees pursue a marginal power uprate, they would share an annual benefit ranging from \$50 million to \$135 million.

- issued a performance review report for the Westinghouse commercial fuel fabrication facility located near Columbia, South Carolina. The report indicates that performance at the plant generally has improved since the agency's last review, but that certain radiological criticality safety controls and controls for the measurement of uranium being processed, mentioned in the plant's 1998 performance review, continue to need improvement, along with adherence to requirements for nuclear material shipping containers.
- completed public workshops, attended by representatives from utilities, industry, States, NRC, and members of the public, in each of the four NRC regions. The workshops provided information about the key attributes of the new oversight process.
- conducted a public workshop to explain and obtain stakeholder views on the Revision of the Oversight Program for Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facilities.
- conducted a public workshop on industry implementation of the revised Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, concentrating on: (1) potential overlapping requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 and 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) shutdown risk management issues, and (3) the RROP.
- conducted an April 4 public meeting with stakeholders on the environmental review related to the application of Entergy Operations, Inc., to renew its operating license for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1. The meeting was held in Russellville, Arkansas, and provided a forum for members of the public to comment on environmental issues NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

I have enclosed (Enclosure 2) the March update to the Tasking Memorandum which delineates the specific initiatives completed by the agency since August 1998 and future milestones.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Meserve", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosures:

1. March Monthly Report
2. Tasking Memorandum

cc: Senator Max Baucus





UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 3, 2000

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Ron Packard, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 106-58 and House Report 106-253, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the Fiscal Year 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. As further directed in House Report 106-253, we have expanded the monthly report to include regulatory reform efforts affecting power reactor operations beyond 10 CFR Part 50, particularly NRC efforts to harmonize NRC security regulations with Part 50. We have also expanded the monthly report to include the status of all license renewal applications that are under active review and other NRC initiatives in developing implementation guidance for the license renewal rule. I am pleased to transmit the sixteenth report, which covers the month of March (Enclosure 1).

I would like to update you on four significant items of interest we called to your attention in last month's report. The first item concerned the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant steam generator tube failure. As you know, there has been substantial public and Congressional interest in this event. The Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition to the NRC asking that the NRC require ConEd to replace the four steam generators prior to allowing restart. The NRC has accepted this matter for review. Information about this petition is available on the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>), and we will inform you of the results of the NRC decision as soon as it is available. In general, the NRC sets minimum requirements that must be met by ConEd to assure protection of public health and safety. The NRC will oversee ConEd's steam generator tube inspections, repairs, and other corrective actions to assure these public health and safety requirements are met. The NRC will not approve restart until ConEd demonstrates these specific requirements have been met.

There is no change in the status of the second item, which concerned the deferral of the Commission decision on the relocation of the NRC Technical Training Center (TTC) from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the NRC headquarters area. The General Accounting Office study on the merits of the move is ongoing, and the Commission will not act until it has had an opportunity to consider any GAO recommendations. We will inform you of our conclusions.

The third item concerned the Commission approval of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application. Since the February report, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission acted properly in granting 20 more years of operating life to the twin-reactor plant. The Commission was pleased with the Court's decision. We have maintained throughout the proceeding that the National Whistleblower Center's case was without merit, and we are pleased that the Court has sustained our position on that matter. Having said that, let me assure you that the Commission welcomes public involvement in license renewal or other agency actions, either through the Commission's adjudicatory or administrative processes. Such involvement must, however, follow our rules.

The fourth item concerned the initial implementation of NRC's revised reactor oversight process (RROP) at all commercial nuclear power plants (with the exception of D.C. Cook due to its extended shutdown), which became effective on April 2. As we come to the end of the first month of the RROP, performance indicator data for the first quarter of calendar year 2000 has been received from all plants and will be available on NRC's website in the near future. No significant issues or concerns with RROP have emerged since its implementation earlier this month.

The February report also provided information on a number of significant NRC activities. These activities included the submittal of formal comments to the Department of Energy on its draft environmental impact statement for possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the absence of any significant computer problems experienced by NRC and its licensees arising from the February 29, 2000, leap year transition; and receipt of two additional license renewal applications, bringing the total number of license renewal applications under active NRC review to three, which involve six operating nuclear power plants (Oconee 1, 2 and 3; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1; and Hatch 1 and 2).

During this reporting period, NRC staff conducted its 12<sup>th</sup> Regulatory Information Conference. This annual conference, which had over a thousand attendees, brings together NRC, its licensees, representatives from the international commercial nuclear power community, and other interested stakeholders and provides a forum for the exchange of information about important matters facing the nuclear power industry and the NRC. Also, on March 20, the Commission published a final rule that added the Transnuclear TN-32 dry cask system to the list of approved dry cask storage systems for the storage of spent fuel. Approval of this final rule provides NRC licensees additional flexibility in managing the handling and storage of spent fuel generated by their reactor operations.

Since our February report, the Commission and the NRC staff also:

- jointly submitted with the Department of Labor, proposed language to Congress to amend the Energy Reorganization Act to further protect nuclear industry employees from retaliation by their employers for raising safety issues. The proposed language would set more realistic time limits for steps in the adjudicatory process and specify explicit time frames for steps for which no time limits are currently provided.
- forwarded for Commission approval the staff's review of the Oconee Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application and recommendation to authorize renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 for an additional twenty years. The staff briefed

the Commission on its review and recommendation in a public meeting scheduled for May 2.

- issued the safety evaluation report (SER) for the ABB "Crossflow" measuring system topical report. The increased accuracy of the Crossflow measuring system can be used to support a reduction in the power level margin used in the plant emergency core cooling system (ECCS) evaluations. In turn, licensees can submit a license amendment to operate the power plant at higher power levels. With issuance of the ABB Crossflow SER, licensees seeking such license amendments now have a choice between two vendor designs.

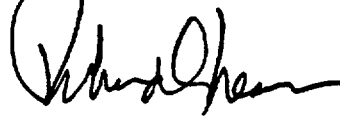
In a related matter, the staff submitted for Commission approval a final rule that amends 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, "ECCS Evaluation Models." The amendment will facilitate small but cost-beneficial power uprates for commercial nuclear power plants seeking to utilize the improved feedwater flow measurement systems discussed above. While all plants could conceivably benefit from this risk-informed rulemaking, if only 50 plant licensees pursue a marginal power uprate, they would share an annual benefit ranging from \$50 million to \$135 million.

- issued a performance review report for the Westinghouse commercial fuel fabrication facility located near Columbia, South Carolina. The report indicates that performance at the plant generally has improved since the agency's last review, but that certain radiological criticality safety controls and controls for the measurement of uranium being processed, mentioned in the plant's 1998 performance review, continue to need improvement, along with adherence to requirements for nuclear material shipping containers.
- completed public workshops, attended by representatives from utilities, industry, States, NRC, and members of the public, in each of the four NRC regions. The workshops provided information about the key attributes of the new oversight process.
- conducted a public workshop to explain and obtain stakeholder views on the Revision of the Oversight Program for Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facilities.
- conducted a public workshop on industry implementation of the revised Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, concentrating on: (1) potential overlapping requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 and 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) shutdown risk management issues, and (3) the RROP.
- conducted an April 4 public meeting with stakeholders on the environmental review related to the application of Entergy Operations, Inc., to renew its operating license for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1. The meeting was held in Russellville, Arkansas, and provided a forum for members of the public to comment on environmental issues NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

I have enclosed (Enclosure 2) the March update to the Tasking Memorandum which delineates the specific initiatives completed by the agency since August 1998 and future milestones.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Meserve", written in a cursive style.

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosures:

1. March Monthly Report
2. Tasking Memorandum

cc: Representative Peter J. Visclosky



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 3, 2000

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 106-58 and House Report 106-253, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the Fiscal Year 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. As further directed in House Report 106-253, we have expanded the monthly report to include regulatory reform efforts affecting power reactor operations beyond 10 CFR Part 50, particularly NRC efforts to harmonize NRC security regulations with Part 50. We have also expanded the monthly report to include the status of all license renewal applications that are under active review and other NRC initiatives in developing implementation guidance for the license renewal rule. I am pleased to transmit the sixteenth report, which covers the month of March (Enclosure 1).

I would like to update you on four significant items of interest we called to your attention in last month's report. The first item concerned the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant steam generator tube failure. As you know, there has been substantial public and Congressional interest in this event. The Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition to the NRC asking that the NRC require ConEd to replace the four steam generators prior to allowing restart. The NRC has accepted this matter for review. Information about this petition is available on the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>), and we will inform you of the results of the NRC decision as soon as it is available. In general, the NRC sets minimum requirements that must be met by ConEd to assure protection of public health and safety. The NRC will oversee ConEd's steam generator tube inspections, repairs, and other corrective actions to assure these public health and safety requirements are met. The NRC will not approve restart until ConEd demonstrates these specific requirements have been met.

There is no change in the status of the second item, which concerned the deferral of the Commission decision on the relocation of the NRC Technical Training Center (TTC) from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the NRC headquarters area. The General Accounting Office study on the merits of the move is ongoing, and the Commission will not act until it has had an opportunity to consider any GAO recommendations. We will inform you of our conclusions.

The third item concerned the Commission approval of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application. Since the February report, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission acted properly in granting 20 more years of operating life to the twin-reactor plant. The Commission was pleased with the Court's decision. We have maintained throughout the proceeding that the National Whistleblower Center's case was without merit, and we are pleased that the Court has sustained our position on that matter. Having said that, let me assure you that the Commission welcomes public involvement in license renewal or other agency actions, either through the Commission's adjudicatory or administrative processes. Such involvement must, however, follow our rules.

The fourth item concerned the initial implementation of NRC's revised reactor oversight process (RROP) at all commercial nuclear power plants (with the exception of D.C. Cook due to its extended shutdown), which became effective on April 2. As we come to the end of the first month of the RROP, performance indicator data for the first quarter of calendar year 2000 has been received from all plants and will be available on NRC's website in the near future. No significant issues or concerns with RROP have emerged since its implementation earlier this month.

The February report also provided information on a number of significant NRC activities. These activities included the submittal of formal comments to the Department of Energy on its draft environmental impact statement for possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the absence of any significant computer problems experienced by NRC and its licensees arising from the February 29, 2000, leap year transition; and receipt of two additional license renewal applications, bringing the total number of license renewal applications under active NRC review to three, which involve six operating nuclear power plants (Oconee 1, 2 and 3; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1; and Hatch 1 and 2).

During this reporting period, NRC staff conducted its 12<sup>th</sup> Regulatory Information Conference. This annual conference, which had over a thousand attendees, brings together NRC, its licensees, representatives from the international commercial nuclear power community, and other interested stakeholders and provides a forum for the exchange of information about important matters facing the nuclear power industry and the NRC. Also, on March 20, the Commission published a final rule that added the Transnuclear TN-32 dry cask system to the list of approved dry cask storage systems for the storage of spent fuel. Approval of this final rule provides NRC licensees additional flexibility in managing the handling and storage of spent fuel generated by their reactor operations.

Since our February report, the Commission and the NRC staff also:

- jointly submitted with the Department of Labor, proposed language to Congress to amend the Energy Reorganization Act to further protect nuclear industry employees from retaliation by their employers for raising safety issues. The proposed language would set more realistic time limits for steps in the adjudicatory process and specify explicit time frames for steps for which no time limits are currently provided.
- forwarded for Commission approval the staff's review of the Oconee Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application and recommendation to authorize renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 for an additional twenty years. The staff briefed

the Commission on its review and recommendation in a public meeting scheduled for May 2.

- issued the safety evaluation report (SER) for the ABB "Crossflow" measuring system topical report. The increased accuracy of the Crossflow measuring system can be used to support a reduction in the power level margin used in the plant emergency core cooling system (ECCS) evaluations. In turn, licensees can submit a license amendment to operate the power plant at higher power levels. With issuance of the ABB Crossflow SER, licensees seeking such license amendments now have a choice between two vendor designs.

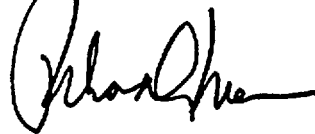
In a related matter, the staff submitted for Commission approval a final rule that amends 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, "ECCS Evaluation Models." The amendment will facilitate small but cost-beneficial power uprates for commercial nuclear power plants seeking to utilize the improved feedwater flow measurement systems discussed above. While all plants could conceivably benefit from this risk-informed rulemaking, if only 50 plant licensees pursue a marginal power uprate, they would share an annual benefit ranging from \$50 million to \$135 million.

- issued a performance review report for the Westinghouse commercial fuel fabrication facility located near Columbia, South Carolina. The report indicates that performance at the plant generally has improved since the agency's last review, but that certain radiological criticality safety controls and controls for the measurement of uranium being processed, mentioned in the plant's 1998 performance review, continue to need improvement, along with adherence to requirements for nuclear material shipping containers.
- completed public workshops, attended by representatives from utilities, industry, States, NRC, and members of the public, in each of the four NRC regions. The workshops provided information about the key attributes of the new oversight process.
- conducted a public workshop to explain and obtain stakeholder views on the Revision of the Oversight Program for Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facilities.
- conducted a public workshop on industry implementation of the revised Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, concentrating on: (1) potential overlapping requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 and 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) shutdown risk management issues, and (3) the RROP.
- conducted an April 4 public meeting with stakeholders on the environmental review related to the application of Entergy Operations, Inc., to renew its operating license for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1. The meeting was held in Russellville, Arkansas, and provided a forum for members of the public to comment on environmental issues NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

I have enclosed (Enclosure 2) the March update to the Tasking Memorandum which delineates the specific initiatives completed by the agency since August 1998 and future milestones.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Meserve", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosures:

1. March Monthly Report
2. Tasking Memorandum

cc: Senator Harry Reid





UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 3, 2000

CHAIRMAN.

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year 2000 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 106-58 and House Report 106-253, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the Fiscal Year 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. As further directed in House Report 106-253, we have expanded the monthly report to include regulatory reform efforts affecting power reactor operations beyond 10 CFR Part 50, particularly NRC efforts to harmonize NRC security regulations with Part 50. We have also expanded the monthly report to include the status of all license renewal applications that are under active review and other NRC initiatives in developing implementation guidance for the license renewal rule. I am pleased to transmit the sixteenth report, which covers the month of March (Enclosure 1).

I would like to update you on four significant items of interest we called to your attention in last month's report. The first item concerned the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant steam generator tube failure. As you know, there has been substantial public and Congressional interest in this event. The Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition to the NRC asking that the NRC require ConEd to replace the four steam generators prior to allowing restart. The NRC has accepted this matter for review. Information about this petition is available on the NRC Web site (<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>), and we will inform you of the results of the NRC decision as soon as it is available. In general, the NRC sets minimum requirements that must be met by ConEd to assure protection of public health and safety. The NRC will oversee ConEd's steam generator tube inspections, repairs, and other corrective actions to assure these public health and safety requirements are met. The NRC will not approve restart until ConEd demonstrates these specific requirements have been met.

There is no change in the status of the second item, which concerned the deferral of the Commission decision on the relocation of the NRC Technical Training Center (TTC) from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to the NRC headquarters area. The General Accounting Office study on the merits of the move is ongoing, and the Commission will not act until it has had an opportunity to consider any GAO recommendations. We will inform you of our conclusions.

The third item concerned the Commission approval of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application. Since the February report, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the Commission acted properly in granting 20 more years of operating life to the twin-reactor plant. The Commission was pleased with the Court's decision. We have maintained throughout the proceeding that the National Whistleblower Center's case was without merit, and we are pleased that the Court has sustained our position on that matter. Having said that, let me assure you that the Commission welcomes public involvement in license renewal or other agency actions, either through the Commission's adjudicatory or administrative processes. Such involvement must, however, follow our rules.

The fourth item concerned the initial implementation of NRC's revised reactor oversight process (RROP) at all commercial nuclear power plants (with the exception of D.C. Cook due to its extended shutdown), which became effective on April 2. As we come to the end of the first month of the RROP, performance indicator data for the first quarter of calendar year 2000 has been received from all plants and will be available on NRC's website in the near future. No significant issues or concerns with RROP have emerged since its implementation earlier this month.

The February report also provided information on a number of significant NRC activities. These activities included the submittal of formal comments to the Department of Energy on its draft environmental impact statement for possible future high-level radioactive waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; the absence of any significant computer problems experienced by NRC and its licensees arising from the February 29, 2000, leap year transition; and receipt of two additional license renewal applications, bringing the total number of license renewal applications under active NRC review to three, which involve six operating nuclear power plants (Oconee 1, 2 and 3; Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1; and Hatch 1 and 2).

During this reporting period, NRC staff conducted its 12<sup>th</sup> Regulatory Information Conference. This annual conference, which had over a thousand attendees, brings together NRC, its licensees, representatives from the international commercial nuclear power community, and other interested stakeholders and provides a forum for the exchange of information about important matters facing the nuclear power industry and the NRC. Also, on March 20, the Commission published a final rule that added the Transnuclear TN-32 dry cask system to the list of approved dry cask storage systems for the storage of spent fuel. Approval of this final rule provides NRC licensees additional flexibility in managing the handling and storage of spent fuel generated by their reactor operations.

Since our February report, the Commission and the NRC staff also:

- jointly submitted with the Department of Labor, proposed language to Congress to amend the Energy Reorganization Act to further protect nuclear industry employees from retaliation by their employers for raising safety issues. The proposed language would set more realistic time limits for steps in the adjudicatory process and specify explicit time frames for steps for which no time limits are currently provided.
- forwarded for Commission approval the staff's review of the Oconee Nuclear Power Plant license renewal application and recommendation to authorize renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 for an additional twenty years. The staff briefed

the Commission on its review and recommendation in a public meeting scheduled for May 2.

- issued the safety evaluation report (SER) for the ABB "Crossflow" measuring system topical report. The increased accuracy of the Crossflow measuring system can be used to support a reduction in the power level margin used in the plant emergency core cooling system (ECCS) evaluations. In turn, licensees can submit a license amendment to operate the power plant at higher power levels. With issuance of the ABB Crossflow SER, licensees seeking such license amendments now have a choice between two vendor designs.

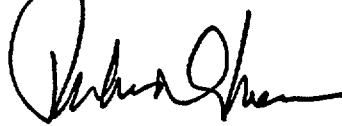
In a related matter, the staff submitted for Commission approval a final rule that amends 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix K, "ECCS Evaluation Models." The amendment will facilitate small but cost-beneficial power uprates for commercial nuclear power plants seeking to utilize the improved feedwater flow measurement systems discussed above. While all plants could conceivably benefit from this risk-informed rulemaking, if only 50 plant licensees pursue a marginal power uprate, they would share an annual benefit ranging from \$50 million to \$135 million.

- issued a performance review report for the Westinghouse commercial fuel fabrication facility located near Columbia, South Carolina. The report indicates that performance at the plant generally has improved since the agency's last review, but that certain radiological criticality safety controls and controls for the measurement of uranium being processed, mentioned in the plant's 1998 performance review, continue to need improvement, along with adherence to requirements for nuclear material shipping containers.
- completed public workshops, attended by representatives from utilities, industry, States, NRC, and members of the public, in each of the four NRC regions. The workshops provided information about the key attributes of the new oversight process.
- conducted a public workshop to explain and obtain stakeholder views on the Revision of the Oversight Program for Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facilities.
- conducted a public workshop on industry implementation of the revised Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, concentrating on: (1) potential overlapping requirements of 10 CFR 50.59 and 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) shutdown risk management issues, and (3) the RROR.
- conducted an April 4 public meeting with stakeholders on the environmental review related to the application of Entergy Operations, Inc., to renew its operating license for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1. The meeting was held in Russellville, Arkansas, and provided a forum for members of the public to comment on environmental issues NRC should consider in its review of the proposed license renewal.

I have enclosed (Enclosure 2) the March update to the Tasking Memorandum which delineates the specific initiatives completed by the agency since August 1998 and future milestones.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard A. Meserve', written in a cursive style.

Richard A. Meserve

Enclosures:

1. March Monthly Report
2. Tasking Memorandum