

August 22, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Meserve  
Commissioner Dicus  
Commissioner Diaz  
Commissioner McGaffigan  
Commissioner Merrifield

FROM: Janice Dunn Lee, Director //RA//  
Office of International Programs

SUBJECT: EXTENDED FOREIGN ASSIGNEE AT NRC

Serge Roudier, a staff person of the Directorate for the Safety of Nuclear Installations in France (DSIN), recently completed a three-year training assignment with the NRR staff. The purpose of this memo is to inform the Commission of his activities and the changes made to the DSIN program based on this experience.

This is an unusually lengthy period of time for an NRC assignment. Some years ago, DSIN embarked on a program to place a number of their personnel with a few of their regulatory counterparts for an extended period. They sent persons to Canada, Spain, the U.K., and the U.S. for three-year assignments. The three-year duration was chosen to provide in-depth understanding and full integration of their assignee into the day-to-day regulatory activities of the host country. With this detailed knowledge, the assignees return to France, and DSIN compares and possibly modifies its own programs and activities based on these experiences. Although these foreign assignments constitute a substantial resource allocation for DSIN, they feel it can be a cost-effective way of obtaining technical and organizational practices on a wide variety of subjects and the linkage of both in setting the overall picture of national nuclear safety.

During his tenure at NRC, Roudier worked with the Special Inspection Branch of NRR, participating as a full team member on two engineering design inspections. Next, he worked with the Operator Licensing, Human Performance and Plant Support Branch, where he participated in emergency preparedness licensing reviews and contributed to the associated safety evaluation reports for Crystal River, Kewaunee, Oconee, Three Mile Island 1, and Washington Nuclear Project 2 nuclear power plants. Additionally, he participated in the reviews for two plants undergoing decommissioning, Rancho Seco and Trojan. Roudier served on a joint NRC-industry working group that developed revisions for emergency action levels. He participated in the development of thresholds for emergency preparedness performance indicators and in the associated training of inspectors for the reactor oversight pilot program. He participated and made presentations at several public symposiums on emergency planning programs. Finally, he coauthored a paper presented at the 7<sup>th</sup> Topical Meeting on Emergency Preparedness and Response of the American Nuclear Society. His NRC management consistently rated his work as excellent.



In his exit interviews, Roudier noted that foreign assignees learn from NRC's processes and activities which benefit the assignee's organizations when they return. Three areas that Roudier identified that DSIN could learn from NRC are:

1. the openness and comprehensiveness of regulatory activities
2. the efforts to make its regulatory activities more cooperative by seeking and considering input from all stakeholders
3. the commitment to use new technology to enhance the agency's efficiency and effectiveness

Based on his experience at NRC, Roudier noted that specific changes have been made at DSIN in two areas, reactor inspection practices and the use of information technology. Regarding inspections, they are now longer in duration and are comprised of larger teams, encompassing a broader range of specialties. This combination permits more in-depth attention to specific technical areas of interest than the previous arrangement permitted.

DSIN is in the process of upgrading their use of information technology. Based on his experience here, DSIN will make increased usage of the Internet for communication with regional inspection offices, licensees and the public, thereby, reducing the paperwork load.

NRR indicates that Roudier applied his own background in emergency planning and preparedness to produce good work. With the long period of his assignment, he was able to contribute constructively to the work of the office.

Finally, in the NRC environment of seeking and considering input from external bodies, Roudier opined a consistent theme of DSIN Director, Mr. A.C. Lacoste, that NRC should take the next step by placing some of its personnel at regulatory organizations of the major nuclear countries to obtain their valuable experience, to enrich its own knowledge base and to improve the way it conducts its business. It is noted that the NRC staff has not determined whether or how it might undertake such an assignment.

This memorandum was coordinated with the EDO.

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