INFORMATION REPORT

September 14, 2000 SECY-00-0197

For: The Commissioners

From: John W. Craig, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO

Subject: SECY-00-0197 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 8, 2000

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*No input this week.

/RA/

John W. Craig
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
D. Diec, OEDO

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/RA/
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09/14/00	09/14/00

WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 8, 2000

The Weekly Information Report is compiled by the Office of the EDO and includes highlights of Headquarters and Regional Office activities.
Contact: D. Diec, OEDO by E-mail: dtd@nrc.gov.

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*No input this week

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Duane Arnold

On August 31, 2000, the NRC staff met with representatives of Nuclear Management Company (NMC), the licensee for the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC), at the NRC in Rockville, Maryland. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the content and format of NMC's upcoming license amendment applications for a power uprate at DAEC.

The licensee plans to submit the extended power uprate amendment in October 2000 with an anticipated approval needed by the end of the Spring 2001 refueling outage. The planned amendment will be for an extended power uprate to be implemented over the next 3 years to 1912 MWt , which would be 15.3 percent above the current licensed power level (1658 MWt). This would represent a total uprate of 20 percent above the original licensed power level (1593 MWt). As part of the power uprate program, the plant's accident dose calculations are being modified using final Reg Guide 1.183 guidance for new alternate source term with some deviations that will be reviewed by the staff. Submittals in support of the planned uprate will begin in September 2000. The licensee's uprate is dependant, in part, on NRC acceptance of the GE Licensing Topical Report lead plant submittal on the thermal hydraulic stability method change that will be submitted in the next few weeks.

During the meeting, the NRC staff discussed various aspects of the review with the licensee. The extended power uprate amendment will be similar to those approved for the Monticello and Hatch. However, the DAEC licensee is requesting a higher percentage power level increase (15.3%) than implemented at plants previously.

The Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) plans to review the safety evaluation (SE) for the power uprate.

Indian Point Unit 2

On September 3, 2000, Consolidated Edison Company of New York (ConEd) issued a stop work order to preclude further work inside of the containment in support of the replacement of the steam generators at Indian Point Unit 2. This action was taken after a fire occurred due to hot work for the removal of some structural steel. A piece of hot metal from a cutting operation fell on and ignited a nylon tarp. ConEd has formed a team to determine the root cause of the fire and the need for further corrective action. During the fire, ConEd declared an Unusual Event because the fire was not extinguished within the first 15 minutes. The on-site fire brigade fully extinguished the fire in about 30 minutes. Neither the fire or the fire extinguishing agents caused damage to plant equipment.

The staff met with ConEd September 11, 2000, at the plant site to discuss the licensee's recovery plan after being designated as an "agency focus" plant. The regulatory conference with ConEd to discuss the findings from the steam generator inspection is scheduled for September 26, 2000, at the Region I offices.

Presentation on Licensing Requirements for Mixed Oxide (MOX) in Commercial U.S. Reactors Fuel to the Seventh Annual International Nuclear Materials Policy Forum

On September 6, 2000, the Branch Chief for Reactor Systems Branch, NRR made a presentation before the Seventh Annual International Nuclear Materials Policy Forum on the Disposition, Stewardship and Utilization of Plutonium, Highly Enriched Uranium, and other Fissle Materials in Alexandria, Virginia. The conference was sponsored by Exchange Monitor Publications and Forums, Inc., and the Russian-American Nuclear Society Advisory Council. The forum was attended by representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy, various Russian nuclear organizations, Japanese, French and other foreign nuclear organizations, fuel vendors, consultants on the plutonium disposition program and interested members of the public. NRC staff provided a high level overview of the its approach to the review of MOX fuel in nuclear reactors including the requirements for fuel design and emergency core cooling system performance.

Germany and Switzerland

NRC staff from the Reactor Systems Branch, NRR, is meeting in Germany and Switzerland, September 5-19, with German and Swiss regulators on fuel licensing practices, fuel performance, and requirements for burnup extension. The emphasis is on high burnup fuel. MOX issues will be discussed as time allows. The topics to be covered are: the technical background for duplex cladding and high burnup application with the emphasis on actual data and the mechanical design of high burnup assemblies and service techniques used during inspection campaigns. A visit to a reactor site to obtain information on their lead test assembly program, aggressive burnup strategies and inspection techniques is also planned.

France

NRR and RES staff will meet on September 19-20 with DSIN, IPSN and EDF for a Regulatory Information Exchange Meeting on Safety Insights from Event/Condition Risk Analyses. The purposes of the meeting are to share experience with the application of event/condition risk analyses and to gain an understanding of how insights from such event/condition risk analyses may be applied in regulatory processes and operational safety decision making.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

10 CFR Part 40 Rulemaking

On August 28, 2000, a Federal Register notice was published on the formation of the 10 CFR Part 40 Rulemaking and the Jurisdictional Working Groups regarding NRC regulatory activities concerning the distribution of source materials and the jurisdictional and technical issues related to the regulation of materials with low concentrations of uranium and thorium. The first Jurisdictional Working Group Meeting will be held on September 20-21, 2000, at NRC Headquarters. This meeting will include representatives from the state of Colorado, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Department of Energy, the Department of Transportation, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The meeting will explore the best approach to delineate the responsibilities of NRC and other regulatory agencies regarding materials with low concentrations of uranium and thorium.

The Part 40 Rulemaking Working Group will be comprised of NRC staff and a representative from the state of Utah. A rulemaking plan is scheduled to be submitted to the Commission by March 2001.

International Atomic Energy Agency Specialists Meeting on Protection of the Environment from the Effects of Ionizing Radiation

During the week of August 28, 2000, a representative of the Division of Waste Management participated in an International Atomic Energy Agency specialists' meeting on the protection of the environment from the effects of ionizing radiation. The workshop meeting had representatives of 22 participating countries. Other participants included the European Commission, International Commission on Radiological Protection, International Union of Radioecology, and the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme. The working group is to examine the need for international criteria for environmental protection. Other U.S. representatives included members of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy.

International Forum on Stakeholder Confidence

During the week of August 28, 2000, a representative of the Division of Waste Management represented the NRC at the first meeting and workshop of the Forum on Stakeholder Confidence (FSC), which was convened in Paris, France. The Forum was chartered by the Radioactive Waste Management Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) with the intent of supporting NEA Member countries' efforts to respond to the range of audiences interested in the management of radioactive wastes. The purpose of this initial workshop was to create the opportunity for FSC members to become acquainted, to lay the bases for future working programs, and to encourage active interaction among the participants. The workshop comprised five working groups on the topics: (1) the changing environment for waste management programs; (2) trust and the institutional framework; (3) "stakeholders" and "the public"–who are they; (4) is there a

new dynamics of dialogue and decision making (chaired by the NRC representative); and (5) are waste management institutions set up for achieving stakeholder confidence over long time periods. The working group chairs will contribute to the subsequent preparation of a workshop summary document, develop proposals for future FSC products, and prepare a work plan for future meetings. The next meeting of the FSC is scheduled for January 17-18, 2001.

Meeting with BNFL Fuel Solutions on Technical Issues for Transportation Application

On August 31, 2000, the Spent Fuel Project Office staff met with BNFL Fuel Solutions (BFS) to discuss their proposed FuelSolutions™ transportation cask application. BFS provided an update on the transportation cask and impact limiter designs, a summary of previous impact limiter testing and path forward for additional testing, an update on the Trojan (Transtor) basket design modifications, and a proposed schedule for submittal of a transportation license application. BFS will use the FuelSolutions™ transportation cask for transportation of the Trojan canister, and the FuelSolutions™ W21 and W74 canisters.

Seventh Annual International Nuclear Materials Policy Forum

On September 6-8, 2000, members of NMSS and NRR staff participated in the Seventh Annual International Nuclear Materials Policy Forum in Alexandria, Virginia. The Forum was convened by Exchange Monitor Publications and Forums. Keynote speakers at the Forum included Department of Energy (DOE) Undersecretary Ernest Moniz, Russian Federation First Deputy Minister for Atomic Energy Valentin Ivanov, and Japanese Deputy Director General Motohide Konaka from the Science and Technology Agency.

Participants of the Forum were optimistic about the prospects for progress immediately following the signing of an agreement between the U.S. and Russian Federation concerning the management and disposition of plutonium designated as no longer required for defense purposes and related cooperation. The agreement commits the U.S. and Russia to irretrievable and transparent disposal of 34 metric tons of excess weapons grade plutonium through irradiation as fuel in nuclear reactors, immobilization in stable forms, or any other methods agreed upon by the parties. The Russian Federation signed the agreement on August 13, 2000, and Vice President Gore signed on September 1, 2000. The agreement now applies and will enter into force upon ratification by the Russian Duma. According to DOE representatives, Senator Helms, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, expressed interest in reviewing the agreement under Section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act. Department of State, however, believes that such a review is not required because the agreement is an executive agreement and does not involve the transfer of special nuclear material. Significant issues, including financing (about $1.8 billion) and liability associated with irradiation of the plutonium in reactors, remain to be resolved before the G-8 meeting in Genoa, Italy, in June 2001.

Most of the presentations at the Forum focused on plutonium disposition plans in the U.S. and Russia and related international collaborative projects. Other presentations included the negotiations of the new agreement for the U.S. Enrichment Corporation to receive downblended Russian High Enriched Uranium after 2002. NRC staff made presentations about the agency's role, responsibilities, and the process for conducting licensing reviews for the Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility and irradiation of the MOX fuel in commercial power reactors. The Forum was well attended and included a broad range of international participants.

Notice Withdrawing a Direct Final Rule Signed by the EDO

On September 5, 2000, the Executive Director for Operations approved a notice withdrawing a direct final rule that would have revised the Pacific Sierra Nuclear Associates VSC-24 cask system listing within the "List of approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks" to include Amendment No. 2 to the Certificate of Compliance (CoC). The NRC is taking this action because it has received significant adverse comments in response to an identical proposed rule that was concurrently published with the direct final rule.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Draft Regulatory Guide on Applications To Renew Operating Licenses

RES has issued DG-1104, “Standard Format and Content for Applications To Renew Nuclear Power Plant Operating Licenses.” This regulatory guide is developed to provide guidance to licensees and applicants on the information to be submitted in an application for renewal of a nuclear power plant operating license, and it recommends a uniform format for structuring and presenting this information. DG-1104 proposes to endorse an NEI document, NEI 95-10, “Industry Guideline for Implementing the Requirements of 10 CFR Part 54 -- The License Renewal Rule.” The draft guide was issued for public comment with drafts of the “Standard Review Plan for the Review of License Renewal Applications for Nuclear Power Plants” (the SRP-LR) and a draft “Generic Aging Lessons Learned (GALL) Report.”

Incident Response Operations
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-II-00-034, Phillip Morris, USA, FAILURE OF SHUTTER MECHANISM TO FULLY CLOSE ON A GENERALLY LICENSED DEVICE.

2. PNO-III-00-035, Englehart and Associates of Madison, WI (Southeast Missouri State University), POTENTIAL OVEREXPOSURE.

3. PNO-III-00-036, Consumers Power Company (Palisades Unit 1), SHUTDOWN TO REPAIR EMERGENCY CORE COOLING SYSTEM CHECK VALVE.

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Contract Award

On August 31, 2000, a contract (NRC-04-00-050) was awarded to The National Academy of Sciences for a study on alternatives for controlling the release of solid materials from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensed facilities. The total estimated cost for this Cost Reimbursement contract is $875,000.00, and the period of performance is 18 months.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 4-Day Period of September 1, 2000 through September 7, 2000:

Self, IG case files: 99-41G dated 1/11/00 and 3/7/00 supplement; 00-21G dated 4/11/00. (FOIA/PA 2000-0343)

Southern California Edison, OI report 4-1999-037 dated 4/20/00. (FOIA/PA 2000-0344)

NUREG/BR-0137, Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards. (FOIA/PA 2000-0345)

Regulations, 10 CFR Part 30 and any other regulations related to equipment containing a radioactive check source. (FOIA/PA 2000-0346)

Site assessment, Rt. 3 West & 120 North, East Rutherford, NJ. (FOIA/PA 2000-0347)

NUREG/BR-0224, “Guidelines for Conducting Public Meetings.” (FOIA/PA 2000-0348)

Chief Financial Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Publication of the 2000 Information Digest

The NRC's annual Information Digest (2000 edition) has been published and will be available next week. The Digest is scheduled to be posted to the web within two weeks.

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Arrivals		
DONOVAN, Larry	HEALTH PHYSICIST	RIV
MONTGOMERY-WHITE, Cheryl	CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OIG
*SHUKLA, Girija	PROJECT MANAGER	NRR
STETSON, Kathleen	SENIOR AUDITOR	OIG
TAYLOR, Joseph	REACTOR INSPECTOR	RIV
Retirements		
YEATES, Elizabeth	CHIEF, PUBLIC DOCUMENT ROOM	OCIO
Departures		
CONTARDI,John	PROJECT ENGINEER	NMSS
KADE, Daryl	BRANCH CHIEF	OCFO
RUSSELL, John	RESIDENT INSPECTOR	RIV

*Effective 9/5/00

Office of Enforcement
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Discrimination Working Group

The working group held the first of its meetings to gather comments from external stakeholders on the NRC's handling of 10 CFR 50.7 (discrimination) issues on September 5, 2000 at NRC. Various groups including the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) provided ideas for the working group's consideration. On September 6, 2000 the working group held its first meeting with internal stakeholders in the Region II office. The second meeting with external stakeholders took place on September 7th in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Potential Enforcement Action Involving Oklahoma State University

Region IV is scheduling a predecisional enforcement conference with Oklahoma State University. The purpose of the conference is to discuss apparent willful violations pertaining to use of material, microcurie quantities of tritium, by untrained individuals in an unauthorized laboratory.

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Media Interest

The headquarters and Region I public affairs offices received press calls on the release of an Inspector General report on the NRC's handling of the Indian Point 2 steam generator tube event.

There was press interest in the USA Today series on contamination of privately owned sites used in the manufacture of nuclear weapons in the 1940s and 1950s.

There was local media coverage of the Missouri University enforcement conference.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
00-132	Meeting Scheduled September 13 in Rockville, Maryland on Safety of Spent Fuel Shipping Casks
00-133	NRC to Hold Public Meeting on Nuclear Research in Maryland on September 15
00-134	NRC Designates its Web Site to Announce Meetings Open to Public
00-135	NRC Schedules Workshop on Fuel Facility Oversight Program
Regions:	
1-00-66	NRC Officials, Indian Point 2 Managers to Discuss Performance Issues
IV-00-35	NRC to Hold Public Workshop in San Luis Obispo on Handling of Discrimination Complaints

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Assistance to Ukraine

The first phase of a new approach to assisting the Ukrainian regulator has been completed. In July 1999, the head of the Nuclear Regulatory Administration (NRA), Oleksandr Smyshliaiev, requested that NRC assistance evolve from providing workshops to providing on-the-job training for the regulator's technical service organization (the State Scientific and Technical Center). The change in approach was approved at the annual planning meeting with NRA in January 2000, and several tasks were approved in principle. These tasks (scheduled to last from one to three years) have been transformed into Statements of Work that have been peer-reviewed by NRC staff.

U.S. Involvement in South African PBMR

In a recent cable, the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria confirmed earlier press reports that PECO Energy has committed to acquiring a stake in the development phase of the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR). The reactor is being developed by the South African national utility, Eskom. The amount of the PECO Energy investment was not identified. PECO Energy is the second international investor in this effort. Earlier BNFL agreed to purchase a 20% stake in the project.

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SRM on SECY-00-0092	9/5/00	Combined License Review Process
Commission Voting Record on SECY-00-0092	9/5/00	(same)
2. REVISED SRM on SECY-00-0129	9/5/00	Workshop Findings on the Entombment Option for Decommissioning Power Reactors and Staff Recommendations on Further Activities
Information Papers		
1. SECY-00-0186	8/31/2000	SECY-00-0186 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending August 25, 2000

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to the Honorable Frank Keating, Governor of Oklahoma, dated August 30, 2000, transmits approval of proposed Agreement under which the NRC will discontinue and the State of Oklahoma will assume regulatory authority over low-level radioactive waste at a land disposal site.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. 10 CFR Part 70; Domestic Licensing of Special Nuclear Material; Possession of a Critical Mass of Special Nuclear Material; Final Rule.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Region II Licensing Manager's Counterpart Meeting

On September 7, 2000, the Director, Project Directorate II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation and the Regional Administrator participated in the Region II Licensing Manager's Counterpart Meeting, held in Atlanta, GA. Discussion topics included feedback on the revised reactor oversight process.

Duke Energy Corporation - Oconee Regulatory Conference

On September 7, 2000, Region II held a Regulatory Conference with representatives from Duke Energy Corporation. The purpose of this conference was to discuss the significance of inspection findings for the Oconee power reactor facility. Discussion included the risk significance of a potential WHITE finding related to the plant mitigation of certain event scenarios involving a tornado.

Managing Change Course

On September 5-6, 2000, Region II held another Managing Change Course for regional staff. This is one of several courses held in the Region over the past year and has facilitated the transition to the changes occurring in the NRC.

National Materials Program Meeting

Two representatives of the National Materials Program Working Group met with regional staff on September 6, 2000, to discuss the Working Group's progress to date and obtain staff comments on the program options being developed.

Region III
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Commissioner Merrifield Tours Prairie Island Nuclear Power Plant

On September 7, 2000, NRC Commissioner Jeffrey S. Merrifield and the NRC Region III Regional Administrator toured the Prairie Island Nuclear Power Plant near Welch, Minnesota.

Commissioner Merrifield Tours Monticello Nuclear Power Plant

On September 8, 2000, NRC Commissioner Jeffrey S. Merrifield and the NRC Region III Regional Administrator toured the Monticello Nuclear Power Plant near Monticello, Minnesota.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

Cooper Nuclear Station

The Regional Administrator visited Cooper Nuclear Station on September 8, 2000. He met with the resident inspectors, toured the facility, and discussed plant status with licensee management.

Office of Congressional Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 8, 2000

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 29					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Gerke	09/11/00 2154 RHOB	10:00	OMB, GAO, CIO Council	Report Card on Federal Agencies' Computer Security	Reps. Horn/Turner Gov't Mgmnt, Info & Technology Government Reform
Combs	September	TBA	NRC Staff and others	Moab	Reps. Barton/Boucher Energy & Power Commerce
Gerke	09/12/00 2154 RHOB	10:00	OMB, Treasury, Private Sector	Creation of a Federal CIO	Reps. Horn/Turner Gov't Mgmnt, Info, & Technology Government Reform
Gerke	09/21/00 SD-342	9:00	GAO	Confirmation Process	Senators Thompson/Lieberman Governmental Affairs