

October 2, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO: L. Joseph Callan
Executive Director for Operations

Anthony J. Galante
Chief Information Officer

Jesse L. Funches
Chief Financial Officer

FROM: John C. Hoyle, Secretary /s/

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - SECY-97-112 - STRATEGIC
ASSESSMENT ISSUE PAPER: STAFFING AND CORE
CAPABILITIES (COMSECY-96-027)(DSI-18)

The Commission has approved the preliminary action plan for projecting and maintaining skill requirements, availability, and staffing as the framework for establishing a human resource planning process, subject to the attached comments.

The staff should develop a more detailed human resource action plan, taking into consideration the attached Commission comments and the results of the review discussed below, and submit it for Commission review.

(EDO)

(SECY Suspense: 1/28/98)

The staff (EDO/CIO/CFO) should review the need for all of the tasks to determine whether a simpler approach is feasible. The results from the current resources planning activities by each office, as described in SECY-97-112, should be considered in deciding the tasks necessary for this plan. Particularly, we should build on the already known staff skills and competencies. After this review, the staff should develop more details of how to accomplish each of the tasks in the plan and submit them to the Commission before implementation.

SECY NOTE: THIS SRM AND SECY-97-112 WILL BE MADE PUBLICLY
AVAILABLE 5 WORKING DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THIS
SRM.

(EDO/CIO/CFO)

(SECY Suspense: 11/28/97)

Attachment:
As stated

cc: Chairman Jackson
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
OGC
CIO
CFO
OCA
OIG
Office Directors, Regions, ACRS, ACNW, ASLBP (via E-Mail)
PDR
DCS

Commission Comments on the Human Resources Action Plan

1. The plan identifies the broad categories of skill needs for the NRC (technical, regulatory, and managerial), but does not specify the approach that would be used to examine the core capabilities and related skills that are needed for each of these three categories.

2. The plan should identify how other agency activities, which are related to human resource planning (e.g., the Office of NRR Job Task Analysis Study, the Office of Research Core Capabilities Study, and the AEOD sponsored effort to assess regulatory knowledge, skills and abilities to identify training requirements), will be integrated into the methodology. Specifically, what elements or results will be used, and for those areas of the agency that are not covered by other initiatives, what methods will be employed to fill in the gaps. The action plan should clearly identify those cases where the plan relies on other agency efforts within specified time frames, as well as any impact on schedule assumptions if these efforts are not completed.

3. The planning methodology and process for human resource activities and programs needs to be well thought out and robust to facilitate the integration of human resource considerations into the agency's decision-making prior to producing products and selecting systems to capture, maintain, and utilize human resource information. The Commission has already decided in the FY 1999 budget process to defer acquisition of the Human Resources Information System (HRIS), and directed a Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) cost-benefit analysis be performed before resources are planned for this activity to consider opportunities for integration with current or other planned systems, such as the Integrated Resource Management System (STARFIRE).

4. The action plan is intended to provide the methodology for identifying the agency's skills and core capabilities, and to provide an integrated approach on how to acquire, maintain, and redirect staff resources to meet the projected skills needed to fulfill NRC's health and safety mission. This strategic framework (Human Resources Strategic Planning within the NRC - NUREG/BR-0100) should be fully developed and provided to the offices before they are requested to project their long-term staffing requirements.

5. The criterion for selecting internal and external staffing sources establishes that the key criteria for determining whether to use internal staff or external sources to perform agency functions is whether or not the function is an inherently governmental function. This appears to be a very broad standard for determining staffing options and may provide little flexibility for considering external staffing sources. The staff

should examine whether additional criteria can be identified in determining the human resource composition. As a part of this examination, the staff should consider whether refinement of the definition of services in support of inherently governmental services could provide greater flexibility in determining staffing sources.

6. The plan should outline the procedures or guidelines that would be used to assure integrity in the recruitment strategies and assess whether the criteria for selecting staffing options are appropriately applied. This section of the plan, which was provided as Attachment 3, should articulate how the table providing the eleven measures for determining whether to staff permanently (long-term) or temporarily (short-term) is expected to be used in assessing the appropriate recruitment strategy. For example, if a manager answers "yes" to 7 or more of the criteria does this suggest hiring permanently?

7. While the staff noted that "budget realities" might force the agency to consider options other than relying on a robust permanent staff, there are additional forces that might tend to move the agency in that direction, such as the fact that the Federal Employee Retirement System makes retention of highly skilled, short-supply, "permanent" employees much more difficult. The staff should consider how other Federal regulatory agencies with similar challenges, such as FDA, are dealing with the balance between relying on permanent staff and greater use of other options (e.g., part-time, term, contract staff).

8. There are "core functions," as the term is used in Attachment 2, that the Commission will need to carry out in some measure as long as source, byproduct, or special nuclear materials are used in academia or industry and there are other functions under this definition that are subject to sharp reductions, if not elimination, depending on budget constraints. The staff should review the definition to ensure it is not overly broad such that it may lend itself to categorizing almost every function as core.

9. Attachment 5 discussed the possibility of piloting a variable compensation system that would reward high performing employees and encourage poor performing employees to leave the Agency. The Commission should be provided an assessment as to whether such a pilot is feasible before much effort is expended on it.