

05FR24514
April 26, 2000

STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF NUCLEAR SAFETY

1035 OUTER PARK DRIVE • SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62704
217-785-9900 • 217-782-6133 (TDD)

George H. Ryan
Governor

Thomas W. Ortziger
Director

August 9, 2000

Chief
Rules and Directives Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Stop T6-D59
Washington, DC 20555-0001

RECEIVED
200 AUG 15 AM 8:10
Rules and Directives
Branch
(T6-D59)

Re: Draft Regulatory Guide NUREG-1556, Vol. 17, Program-Specific Guidance
about Special Nuclear Material of Less Than Critical Mass

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety (the Department) hereby submits its comments on the referenced Draft Regulatory Guide. This document is an improvement over previous Regulatory Guides on this subject. We believe the NUREG 1556 series of guides that you have published will expedite the preparation and review process for radioactive materials license applications. The following comments are provided for your consideration to further improve this document:

1. As with other NUREG 1556 documents, it seems that an undue burden has been shifted to inspection staff with respect to evaluation of procedures, practices, equipment acceptability, etc. NRC is apparently allowing licensees to maintain critical procedures on file for inspector review. Our concern is that the licensee may operate under these procedures, which may not be adequate for protection of public health and safety, for a considerable time period before the inspection review occurs. In addition, inspectors do not always have time to carefully review detailed procedures in the field. Coupled with NRC's proposed reduction in the renewal/inspection frequency, it is difficult to understand how the current level of radiation safety can be maintained.
2. There appears to be an error as all of the pages in the body of the draft have a header on both pages stating "MINIMIZATION OF CONTAMINATION".



TEMPLATE: ADM-013

E-RIDS = ADM-03
Carrie Brown

3. In Section 8.5.1, please include a "specific activity chart" as an appendix with additional values for U-233 and Pu. SNM is unusual in that limits are addressed in mass (grams) as opposed to Curies.
4. In Section 8.6, please include a specific notation for requests for authorized use which includes chemical processes involving separations, digestions or acidic washes as these processes inherently have other concerns associated with them such as facility/equipment needs or effluent evaluations.
5. In Section 8.7, a discussion of the delegation of RSO duties should be included. This is particularly important for manufacturers/distributors where the RSO duties will include a wide variety of responsibilities. In this same section, the applicant should also submit duties and responsibilities of the RSO. It would be very helpful if the NRC would specify the appropriate training and education necessary to be an RSO and/or an authorized user for a neutron howitzer. Typical applicants for these materials include high school and junior college teachers. Making the NUREG "user friendly" to this group of licensees would enhance the document.
6. In Section 8.10.4, the licensee should submit the evaluation it performed that demonstrates individuals are not likely to receive exposures in excess of 10% of the dose. Inspection of this item could be significantly "after the fact" where determination of worker dose, if deemed necessary, would be very difficult (see previous general comments above).
7. In Section 8.10.6, the applicant should be asked to submit "General Rules for Safe Use" for review. Licensees are asked to "commit to establishing appropriate operating and emergency procedures." These procedures should be submitted for review and approval, as a mere commitment is not adequate to ensure radiation safety.
8. In regards to Section 8.10.10, the Department believes that this section can be omitted entirely. As you have stated in the response section, this item is covered in detail in other sections of the guide.
9. In Section 8.11, again the applicant is asked to commit to establishing procedures for waste disposal. This is an especially critical item to ensure public health and safety. The applicant must submit these in advance for review rather than simply commit to developing them.

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

August 9, 2000

Page 3

10. Headings for the columns in Table K.1 appear to be missing. Headings should identify when/where the various values should be applied.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me or Mr. Gibb Vinson at (217) 785-9947 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Joseph G. Klinger in cursive, with the initials "GM" at the end.

Joseph G. Klinger, Chief
Division of Radioactive Materials

CGV:kjg

cc: James Lynch, State Agreements Officer