



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

October 13, 2000

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

FROM: William D. Travers *(/RA by W. D. Travers)*  
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: PLANS FOR THE "ONE VOICE" INITIATIVE AND RESULTS OF  
THE SEPTEMBER 20, 2000, FEDERAL RADIOLOGICAL  
PREPAREDNESS COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING  
FOR YOUR INFORMATION

As a result of the lessons learned from the Y2K Federal response and coordination effort and the Federal response to the criticality event in Tokai-Mura, Japan, the staff is pursuing an initiative which is referred to as "One Voice." The goal of this initiative is to enhance communication and coordination among the member agencies of the Federal Radiological Preparedness Coordinating Committee (FRPCC) so that the Federal government speaks in a consistent manner following peacetime radiological events or emergencies under the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP), especially those events or emergencies occurring in foreign countries.

The staff described its plans for the "One Voice" initiative to the Commission in COMSECY-00-0024 (dated May 12, 2000). The first of two documents attached to that memorandum was a "One Voice" Initiative Concept. The document provided background information on the FRERP, explained the need for the "One Voice" initiative, and gave the status of Incident Response Operations (IRO) activities related to this issue. The second document was a proposed letter from Dr. Frank J. Congel, Director, IRO, to Mr. Russell Salter, Chairman, FRPCC. After Commission approval, this letter was issued on June 27, 2000, to formally request the FRPCC Chairman to distribute the "One Voice" initiative to the FRPCC members (17 Federal agencies) and to raise it as a topic for discussion at the next FRPCC meeting. The letter also revisited the purpose of the FRERP which recognizes appropriate Lead Federal Agencies (LFA) for responses to both foreign and domestic events with potential radiological consequences.

The FRPCC Chairman subsequently added the "One Voice" initiative to the agenda for the FRPCC meeting, which was held on September 20, 2000. During this meeting, Dr. Charles L. Miller briefed FRPCC members on the purpose and justification for the "One Voice" initiative; on topics the Commission recommended for discussion, which were documented in Staff

Requirements Memorandum COMSECY-00-0024<sup>1</sup> (dated June 16, 2000); and on the NRC's plans regarding this issue. As set forth in the June 27, 2000, letter to Mr. Salter; Dr. Miller also volunteered the NRC staff to chair an applicable committee or subcommittee that would be assigned or formed to resolve the pending issues and establish the appropriate protocols.

After candid discussions, the nine FRPCC members in attendance voted unanimously to assign the issue to the existing Response and Recovery Subcommittee (which wrote and later revised the FRERP). It was decided that an NRC representative would co-chair the subcommittee and that the co-chairmanship might switch to other agencies according to the issues. It was also decided that subcommittee membership would include (at a minimum) representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Preparedness, Training, and Exercises group, FEMA's Response and Recovery group, and the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors (CRCPD). The CRCPD representatives would speak for State interests. Representatives from various other LFAs, such as the Environmental Protection Agency, stated that they too would plan to participate and would support the subcommittee in implementing the "One Voice" initiative.

The FRPCC Chairman asked if the NRC would be willing to take a lead role in developing a mission statement and a proposed schedule for the Response and Recovery Subcommittee. The mission statement would task the subcommittee with implementation and resolution of the "One Voice" initiative. The IRO staff is currently working on the development of this mission statement.

The IRO staff is also aware of an ongoing International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), and World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) initiative involving the development of an international information exchange system. This initiative is in an early stage of development. The staff will inform the Commission about the details of this initiative in separate correspondence when additional details are known. The staff will keep abreast of the initiative to assess its usefulness in conjunction with the "One Voice" initiative."

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<sup>1</sup>In Staff Requirements Memorandum COMSECY-00-0024 (dated June 16, 2000), the Commission directed the NRC staff to ensure that discussions should address and resolve concerns that the Federal Government needs to speak with "One Voice" during such emergencies and that discussions should encompass a broad range of alternatives including the following: 1) a decentralized approach in which each agency responds to inquiries using a common base of information; 2) a centralized approach in which the LFA is responsible for all external communications; 3) an approach in which the White House is responsible for all external communications; 4) an approach in which the FRPCC itself is responsible for all external communications; and 5) a graded approach where responsibility for communication would change as the scope or intensity of the emergency situation changes or as public concerns escalate. The Commission also directed the NRC staff to recommend that the FRPCC seek routine involvement by a White House agency in its activities and in individual agencies' emergency exercises when the scenario, if real, likely would draw significant media attention. In addition, the IRO staff was tasked with identifying the White House point of contact for emergencies in which the NRC would be the LFA and seeking a White House official at least annually in an NRC reactor emergency preparedness exercise.

As directed by the June 16, 2000 Staff Requirements Memorandum, COMSECY-00-0024, the IRO staff is establishing a point of contact in the White House. The outcome will be reported via separate correspondence.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact Leigh Trocine (LXT) at 415-6415.

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