

NEA TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO NRC (HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2000)

Steering Committee for Nuclear Energy (SCNE)

The Steering Committee for Nuclear Energy (SCNE) is responsible for supervising NEA programs, and international implications of initiating and implementing the various activities through a rather elaborate structure of specialized standing committees and working groups. It defines the main orientations of the Agency and must approve its yearly budget and program of work. Committee representatives consist of high-level national officials in charge of nuclear programs in their countries. Current topics of interest include nuclear energy as part of sustainable development, GENERATION IV initiative, and NEA membership issues.

Janice Dunn Lee, Director, Office of International Programs represents NRC at the NEA Steering Committee meetings.

Committee on the Safety of Nuclear Installations (CSNI)

The CSNI made further efforts to help maintain the research capabilities of the OECD countries. Three new large international projects were established in the areas of high burn-up fuel, severe accidents and thermal-hydraulics safety.

Workshops were held on advanced thermal-hydraulics and neutronics codes, and on instrumentation and monitoring of concrete structures. Reports were published on: the effects of ageing on the seismic response of structures and components; fuel safety criteria relative to new design elements; and the validation matrix for the thermal-hydraulic code assessment of VVER reactors.

The Committee continued to interface with the IAEA in the joint NEA-IAEA Incident Reporting system, the only system of its kind providing regulators and governmental organizations with an assessment of safety-significant events. A report was issued on lessons learned from safety-significant events that occurred in nuclear power plants from 1996 to 1999.

Ashok Thadani, Director, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research is the NRC representative to the CSNI.

Committee on Nuclear Regulatory Activities (CNRA)

The CNRA held meetings and workshops on regulatory challenges, including: communication with the public; assuring future nuclear safety competence; regulatory inspection practices (related to radiation protection, long shutdowns and subsequent restarts, use of objective indicators in performance evaluations, maintenance during operation, research reactors, fuel cycle facilities, and contracted work); life extension and upgrading; and the regulatory challenges arising from competition in the electricity market.

The Committee also received a report of a group of senior experts on regulatory effectiveness. The report provides a model for assessing and measuring effectiveness, and discusses quality management models used by regulatory bodies and the types of indicators that might be used to measure regulatory performance.

Sam Collins, Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, represents NRC on the CNRA.

Radioactive Waste Management Committee (RWMC)

The RWMC began work to develop, evaluate, and communicate the "safety case" as a basis for confidence and decision making in radioactive waste disposal, and hosted a forum on stakeholder confidence to address the role of open dialogue in all aspects of radioactive waste management.

An international peer review was organized and carried out on the Swedish SR 97 report, which forms an important part of the decision basis for the spent fuel disposal program in Sweden.

A workshop was held on gas generation, accumulation and migration in underground repositories for radioactive waste, and a second phase of the "Sorption Project" was begun. The Committee also continued to administer an information exchange project on decommissioning.

Margaret Federline, Deputy Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, represents NRC on the RWMC..

Committee on Radiation Protection and Public Health (CRPPH)

The CRPPH published a critical review of how the system of radiation protection should evolve and engaged in discussions with the International Commission on Radiological Protection on new approaches initiated by its Chairman.

The Committee initiated a discussion on stakeholder involvement in radiation protection decision making to help achieve a better integration of radiation protection in modern society.

The Committee also completed the INEX 2 series of regional international nuclear emergency exercises and, on the basis of that experience, published a report entitled, "Monitoring and Data Management Strategies for Nuclear Emergencies."

Cheryl Trottier, Chief Radiation Protection, Environmental Risk and Waste Management Branch, Office of Research is the NRC representative to the CRPPH.