

COORDINATION OF NRC VISITS TO COMMERCIAL REACTOR SITES

0301-01 PURPOSE

This chapter provides the policy for coordinating visits by NRC personnel to commercial reactor sites. This policy is intended to eliminate unnecessary duplication between offices, with licensees, or with INPO, and to minimize instances where activities are scheduled without regard to other ongoing NRC or licensee activities. Full implementation of this policy will improve the efficiency of those regulatory activities which are affected and ensure that there will not be any unnecessary impact on plant operations or other major licensee planned activities.

0301-02 POLICY

The general policy of the NRC is that all NRC visits to commercial reactor sites shall be coordinated and scheduled with the responsible regional office. The focal point for coordinating with the regions the routine visits by headquarters program and support offices shall be the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) project manager. Headquarters offices should apprise the NRR project manager of planned visits whenever practicable. |

This manual chapter addresses routine, planned visits to commercial reactor sites. Non-routine inspections or site visits are not covered by this manual chapter. This manual chapter does not specify detailed procedures for coordinating interoffice communications (verbal and written) with licensees. All such communications from headquarters offices should be coordinated in advance with the NRR project manager.

0301-03 DEFINITIONS

03.01 Routine Visits. Visits of a routine nature to include planned inspection activities, non-inspection visits such as site tours and meetings, licensing reviewer visits, and audits.

03.02 Non-Routine Visits. Visits that are generally reactive in nature and therefore not routinely planned. An example is visits in response to licensee events covered by NRC Management Directive 8.3, "NRC Incident Investigation Program." |

0301-04 APPLICABILITY

All regional and headquarters staff shall comply with the policy statements in this manual chapter.

0301-05 RESPONSIBILITIES

05.01 Regional Offices. Coordinate and schedule visits by NRC or NRC sponsored personnel to commercial reactor sites to avoid duplication and to prevent poorly-timed visits from occurring.

05.02 Headquarters Offices. Coordinate proposed visits to commercial reactor sites with the associated regional office through the appropriate NRR project manager.

05.03 NRR Project Manager. Remain cognizant of the integrated inspection plan for his/her assigned site and review proposed headquarters office visits to commercial reactor sites to ensure that duplication is avoided and that visits are not poorly timed such that they would interfere with a previously planned activity of greater safety importance. Identify conflicts and work with the regional office to resolve them.

0301-06 DISCUSSION OF POLICY

06.01 The purpose of this manual chapter is to outline guidelines for coordinating visits by NRC personnel to commercial reactor sites. These guidelines address coordination between headquarters and regional offices and are intended to ensure that visits to commercial reactor sites are scheduled such that the objectives of NRC visits are achieved with no unnecessary impact on plant operations or other licensee planned activities.

06.02 Regional offices have overall responsibility for coordinating and scheduling NRC visits to reactor sites. NRC presence on-site without the regional office's knowledge should not occur. The regional offices, with input from headquarters offices, should develop and schedule inspection plans for each plant in the Inspection Planning module of the Reactor Program System (IP/RPS). These inspection plans are based on the NRC inspection program, quarterly assessments of licensee performance, inspection findings, and operational events. As a minimum, the inspection plan for each site should include all NRC non-reactive inspections, NRC non-inspection activities, INPO evaluations, and major activities planned by the licensee such as shutdowns or internal audits which impact inspection planning. IP/RPS shall be used as the primary tool for coordinating NRC activities at commercial reactors and should be consulted before contacting the regional office to begin planning. Only regional offices are permitted to enter scheduling information in IP/RPS.

To assist in coordinating NRC site activities, the NRR project manager is the focal point for contacting the regional Project Division Section Chief for visits by all headquarters personnel or their contractors or consultants. The project manager will remain cognizant of the current integrated inspection plan for his/her assigned site and should be apprised early in the planning stages of all proposed visits to commercial reactors by headquarters personnel. Based on an awareness of planned inspection and inspection related activities, major licensee activities and initiatives, and INPO visits, as scheduled in IP/RPS and overall licensee performance, the project manager is responsible for ensuring that the proposed headquarters visits are not overlapping or redundant or poorly timed such that they would interfere with a previously planned activity of higher priority. Project managers shall identify any conflicts (e.g., INPO evaluation, NMSS visits, regional activity, major licensee evolutions) to the regional office and other affected offices and work to resolve them as soon as practicable.

06.03 In light of the potentially significant impact to licensees caused by major inspections and non-inspection activities, the regional office shall ensure that no more than three major activities are conducted during any 12-month assessment cycle without getting approval of the Deputy Regional Administrator following coordination with the Associate Director for Project Licensing and Technical Analysis, NRR. Major activities are defined as visits to

commercial reactor sites during which 20 or more staff-days of onsite effort are expended within a 5-day period (including contractors, trainees or interns) for the purpose of inspecting, researching information, auditing licensing, or other activities requiring significant licensee input or interactions. Generally, this limitation applies on a site bases, unless the units at the site are of a different design or operated under different management programs.

An activity shall be counted as a single major activity even though it may involve more than one site visit that meets or exceeds the staff threshold defined above. When scheduling separate activities at a site, the total impact of all current activities should be considered for its impact on the licensee. However, separate activities conducted concurrently that individually would not be defined as a major activity, even though they collectively result in 20 or more staff-days within a 5 day period, would not be treated as a major activity and would not be subject to the restrictions established above. The restriction on major activities does not apply to operator licensing examination visits, emergency preparedness visits, or reactive team inspections. In addition, visits by senior NRC management officials shall not be subject to these restrictions.

06.04 Coordination between headquarters offices and the regional offices for the purpose of planning and scheduling site visits shall be as described below.

- a. NRR Licensing Site Visits. The NRR project manager, in coordination with the technical reviewer determines the need for site visits to support ongoing licensing activities. The need for site visits is based on either the reviewer's or project manager's need to examine equipment or documents at the site or to talk with plant personnel. The project manager, in consultation with the licensee and the regional Division of Reactor Projects, will determine the schedule for visiting the site consistent with the schedule for completing the licensing activity and ensuring that the proposed visit will not interfere with higher priority planned activities. The regional office should schedule extensive licensing visits in IP/RPS.
- b. NRR Inspection Site Visits. The associated NRR division director, in coordination with regional counterparts, will determine the need for NRR inspections to support regional and headquarters activities. Once it is determined that a particular NRR inspection will be conducted, its scheduling will be coordinated through the associated NRR project manager. The regional offices should schedule these inspections in IP/RPS.
- c. Operator Licensing Examination Visits. Arrangements for operator licensing examinations, in which headquarters will participate, are normally made directly with the utility by the regional branch with operator licensing responsibilities. NRR's Operating Licensing, Human Performance, and Plant Support Branch should inform the regional office directly if it plans to attend. The regional offices should schedule licensing examination visits in IP/RPS.
- d. Visits by Other Headquarters Offices. NMSS, RES, and other headquarters offices will coordinate and schedule visits to commercial reactor sites with the regional office through the NRR project manager. The region will review the request and ensure that proposed visits are integrated with the schedule of activity planned for the site. The regional offices should schedule visits to commercial reactor sites by NMSS and RES in IP/RPS as non-inspection activities.

Arrangements for site visits by the Office of the Executive Director for Operations (OEDO) and the Office of the Commission (OCM) are coordinated with the regional offices and resident inspector. The visitor's technical assistant will normally notify the NRR project manager of the visit and the itinerary. The region should schedule these visits in IP/RPS.

- e. Visits by Headquarters Contractors. The sponsoring organization will coordinate visits by NRC headquarters contractors to commercial reactor sites with the regional office through the NRR project manager. The regional offices should schedule extensive visits in IP/RPS.
- f. Visits by Headquarters Sponsored Visitors. The sponsoring organization will coordinate visits by NRC sponsored visitors to commercial reactor sites with the regional office through the NRR project manager. The regional offices should schedule significant visits in IP/RPS.

06.05 The above guidelines should not preclude free, informal communications between regional and headquarters offices, which are necessary to ensure effective implementation of the NRC's regulatory programs.

END