INFORMATION REPORT

November 23, 2001 SECY-01-0211

For: The Commissioners

From: John W. Craig, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO

Subject: SECY-01-0211 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 16, 2001

Contents	Enclosure
Nuclear Reactor Regulation	A
Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards	B
Nuclear Regulatory Research	C
Incident Response Operations	D
General Counsel	E*
Administration	F
Chief Information Officer	G
Chief Financial Officer	H*
Human Resources	I
Small Business & Civil Rights	J*
Enforcement	K*
State and Tribal Programs	L*
Public Affairs	M
International Programs	N
Office of the Secretary	O
Region I	P
Region II	P
Region III	P*
Region IV	P*
Executive Director for Operations	Q*
Congressional Affairs	R*

*No input this week.

/RA/

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Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
S. Rosenberg, OEDO

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WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 16, 2001

The Weekly Information Report is compiled by the Office of the EDO and includes highlights of Headquarters and Regional Office activities.
Contact: S. Rosenberg, OEDO by E-mail: slr1@nrc.gov.

Use **GO TO** (Ctrl+Home) to advance to the page number for a specific Office.
PgDn and **PgUp** can also be used to advance through the text.

OFFICE	Page	OFFICE	Page
NRR	2	STP	*
NMSS	4	OPA	17
RES	8	IP	18
IRO	9	SECY	19
OGC	*	Region I	20
ADM	10	Region II	21
CIO	11	Region III	*
CFO	*	Region IV	*
HR	15	OEDO	*
SB/CR	*	OCA	*
OE	*		

*No input this week

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

NRC Information Notice 2001-16: Recent Foreign and Domestic Experience with Degradation of Steam Generator Tubes and Internals, dated October 31, 2001

The NRC is issuing this information notice to inform addressees about findings from recent inspections of steam generator tubes and secondary-side internal components and structures. It is expected that recipients will review the information for applicability to their facilities and consider actions, as appropriate, to avoid similar problems.

Public Workshop on Risk-Informing Special Treatment Requirements in 10 CFR Part 50

On November 7, 2001, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) conducted a public workshop on the rulemaking for risk-informing special treatment requirements (Option 2). Approximately 25 representatives of nuclear utilities, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), and other groups attended. Background information for the workshop included preliminary rule concepts, as well as discussion material relating to alternative ways of specifying requirements for treatment of low-risk, but safety-related (RISC-3) structures, systems and components (SSC). The staff presentation included a discussion of “boundary conditions” or “outcomes” expected from requirements concerning treatment of RISC-3 SSC and how various alternatives would achieve these outcomes. NEI presented information on the use of “nuclear industrial treatment” (described in a licensee’s quality assurance plan), and why it is appropriate for RISC-3 SSC treatment.

Staff Holds Public Scoping Meetings and Conducts Site Audit for the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal at Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station

On November 7, 2001, the staff conducted two meetings to solicit comments from the public on the scope of the supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) currently being developed. The SEIS will be a plant-specific supplement to the "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants" (NUREG-1437). Approximately 90 people participated in each meeting, including representatives from Exelon, State and local government agencies, local media organizations, and members of the public. The scoping period ends on November 26, 2001.

In addition, on November 6 and 8, 2001, the staff and its contractors (Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, and Argonne National Laboratory) visited the site to gather additional information on the environmental aspects of the license renewal application. The team considered the full scope of environmental issues, including aquatic and terrestrial ecology, land use, human health, socioeconomics and Exelon’s process for identifying new and significant information on the Category 1 issues identified in NUREG-1437. The staff will use this information to supplement the Peach Bottom Environmental Report while developing the SEIS.

NEI 97-06, Industry Steam Generator Program Guidelines - Public Meeting

On November 1, 2001, the NRC staff met with representatives of the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) and industry at the NRC headquarters for a working level public meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the status of the generic license change package, and staff concerns related to the appropriate regulatory control for inspection intervals to be implemented in the generic change package.

NEI discussed industry comments on the generic license change package. The comment receiving the most attention dealt with the safety factor against burst under accident conditions. A strategy for addressing this matter was agreed upon between NEI and NRC.

Regarding inspection intervals, NEI recently proposed that the intervals be controlled by a licensee commitment process. The staff discussed its proposed approach that these controls be handled through an administrative technical specification, as is currently done. The staff also indicated that before actual inspection intervals can be agreed upon for plants with improved tube materials (600TT and 690TT), there is a need for additional information from operating experience. The industry is currently working on possible funding of such an effort.

Public Meeting on the Staff's Preliminary Technical Assessment for Vessel Head Penetration (VHP) Nozzle Cracking

On November 8, 2001, the staff met with NEI, the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) Materials Reliability Program members, pressurized water reactor (PWR) licensees, and other external stakeholders on the staff's Preliminary Technical Assessment for Vessel Head Penetration Nozzle Cracking. In addition to those in attendance in the Commissioners' Hearing Room, a phone bridge was established for remote participation. Prior to the meeting, slides were distributed to remote participants. The purpose of this meeting was for the staff to present the results of their preliminary technical assessment. Participants were informed that the assessment is generic, and that licensees should contact their project managers to talk about plant-specific issues. The staff indicated that any feedback or new information is welcomed and would be considered and discussed. The staff will continue to dialogue with the industry and external stakeholders, and work on long term solutions to this issue.

TMI-1 Once-Through Steam Generator (OTSG) Tube Failure

A meeting was held on November 9, 2001, between Exelon/Amergen, the licensee for TMI1, and the NRC staff. The purpose of the meeting was for the licensee to provide (1) its root cause assessment of the two OTSG severed tubes that were discovered during the 2001 refueling outage (1R14) steam generator eddy current inspection; and (2) its planned corrective actions.

During performance of the 1R14 steam generator eddy current inspections, the licensee identified two OTSG tubes that had severed circumferentially. Both tubes had previously been plugged when the licensee identified Inner Diameter - Inter Granular Attack (ID-IGA) that was sufficient enough to require them to be removed from service.

The licensee postulates that the circumferential severing failure of the tubes is the result of three simultaneous phenomenon: a tube expansion effect, flow induced vibration, and ID-IGA. The licensee's corrective action plan is to: de-plug tubes that have been removed from service for inspection (with a bobbin probe and, if swelling or indications are observed, a rotating probe inspection will be performed), install stabilizers in all plugged tubes in both OTSGs from the hot leg, regardless of their location in the OTSG (and, therefore, regardless of their exposure to high flow velocities), and install new upper tube sheet plugs. In cases where they are unable to remove an already installed plug, that tube will be "caged" by stabilizing and plugging the surrounding tubes. The stabilizers to be installed extend down to the fourteenth tube support plate; for tubes that already exhibit signs of tube expansion, full-length stabilizers will be installed.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Revision to Private Fuel Storage Safety Evaluation Report Completed

On November 13, 2001, staff from the Spent Fuel Project Office completed, on schedule, a revision to the Safety Evaluation Report (SER) for the proposed Private Fuel Storage Facility. This revision reflects the staff's evaluation of License Application Amendments 20 and 21, submitted by Private Fuel Storage (PFS), LLC, early in CY01. The revisions are to SER Chapter 15, "Accident Analysis." Specifically, Section 15.1.2.11, "Accidents at Nearby Sites-Aircraft Crash Hazards," and Section 15.1.2.18, "Accidents at Nearby Sites-Cruise Missile Testing at the UTTR," are revised to reflect the most current information available from the U.S. Air Force. The staff concludes that, with regard to aircraft crash hazards and cruise missile testing, PFS still demonstrates compliance with all applicable regulatory requirements in 10 CFR Part 72.

Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste and the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards Briefing on Integrated Safety Analysis

On November 14, 2001, staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards and the Risk Task Group provided a briefing to a joint subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste and the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards on integrated safety analysis (ISA). The staff provided brief overviews of the ISA requirements contained in Subpart H of 10 CFR Part 70 and the ISA guidance contained in Chapter 3 of the Part 70 draft standard review plan. The staff discussed current and future ISA-related challenges, and answered several questions asked by the subcommittee members.

Department of Energy Publishes Siting Guidelines for Yucca Mountain

On November 14, 2001, final guidelines the Department of Energy (DOE) will use to determine the suitability of the Yucca Mountain site for development as a possible geologic repository for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel and other high-level radioactive waste were published in the Federal Register (66 FR 57298). These guidelines have been designated 10 CFR Part 963 and were concurred on by the Commission on September 24, 2001. Pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1988, DOE was to characterize only the Yucca Mountain site. Based on these activities and applying the criteria found in Part 963, the Secretary of Energy will make a recommendation to the President on the suitability of Yucca Mountain for a NRC construction authorization application as a possible repository.

Geological Society of America Annual Meeting

On November 1-10, 2001, Division of Waste Management staff attended and presented papers at the annual Geological Society of America (GSA) meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. Three NRC-sponsored papers presented technical concepts, for peer review, that addressed the resolution of 10 CFR Part 63 requirements for risk-informing post-closure performance assessments regarding groundwater flow and transport at the Yucca Mountain candidate repository. Staff participated in DOE staff and contractor discussions on Yucca Mountain

geological conditions. The GSA called the Yucca Mountain project a timely and relevant topic, and held an additional lunchtime discussion on this subject, that was attended by the media and numerous other interested participants.

Status of the Revised 10 CFR Part 35

The appropriation bill for the NRC (H.R. 2231), cleared the House and Senate on November 1, 2001, and has been signed by the President (public law 107-66). The bill prohibited NRC spending on implementation or enforcement of those portions of the revised Part 35 concerning diagnostic nuclear medicine (except training and experience requirements) until a report is submitted to Congress. The Commission was directed to report to Congress by January 31, 2002, why regulatory burden from diagnostic nuclear medicine could not be further reduced without adversely affecting public health and safety. The staff is working on this report and publication of Part 35 is being delayed until the report is completed and submitted to Congress.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Workshop on Potential Effects of Economic Deregulation on Safety in Nuclear Power Plants

On November 1-2, 2001, NRR and the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) conducted a public workshop, "Nuclear Industry Consolidation and Deregulation Issues Workshop." RES was responsible for Session 2 of the Workshop, entitled "Effects of Deregulation on Safety -- Research Issues." The objective of Session 2 was to provide recommendations for possible research on the potential effects of economic deregulation on safety in nuclear power plants. The starting point for the session was an RES sponsored study, "Effects of Deregulation on Safety: Implications Drawn from the Aviation, Rail, and United Kingdom Nuclear Power Industries" (NUREG/CR-6735). Participants included subject matter experts from those industries covered by the study, authors of the NUREG/CR, and other stakeholders. Topics discussed included (1) a learning curve; (2) re-prioritization of expenditures; (3) staffing; (4) effects on human capital (e.g., skill and experience); (5) labor relations; (6) workload for safety regulators; and (7) capital expenditures. The results of the workshop will be assessed and a report on the workshop will be prepared.

Incident Response Operations
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-I-01-036, AmerGen Energy Company, LLC, OYSTER CREEK TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION REQUIRED SHUTDOWN.

2. PNO-III-01-037, NTH Consultants, Ltd., MISSING MOISTURE-DENSITY GAUGE.

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Acquisition Training

On November 14 - 15, 2001, the Division of Contracts and Property Management sponsored an in-house course, "A-76: Performance of Commercial Activities." The course was offered to assist the NRC office representatives in meeting the policies and procedures outlined in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-76, "Performance of Commercial Activities." This OMB Circular requires Federal agencies to compare the cost of contracting and the cost of in-house performance to determine whether commercial activities should be performed with commercial services or performed in-house using Government facilities and personnel. The course was attended by 22 individuals. A second session is being planned to be presented to the Regional Offices during their mid-January meeting in Arlington, Texas.

On November 15, 2001, the Division of Contracts and Property Management conducted a non-mandatory Acquisition Certification and Training Program module entitled "Source Evaluation Panel (SEP) Procedures" with eight attendees. This module focuses on the duties and responsibilities of SEP members including effective evaluation of proposals, determination of the competitive range, and contractor selection.

Small Agency Council Procurement Committee

The Small Agency Procurement Committee's November 13, 2001 meeting focused on contingency planning for procurement managers. David Drapkin, Deputy Associate Administrator for Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration (GSA), spoke on the availability of GSA contracts and services, and emphasized that current rules allowed for timely purchasing in response to September 11, 2001 needs. Discussion also centered on the practical aspects of contingency planning, planning levels of procurement and Purchase Card authority which can be activated in case of emergency, and compiling information on contacts external to the agency for various procurement needs. The Office of Administration is currently updating such information for managers.

List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: FuelSolutions (Part 72)

A direct final rule that revises the FuelSolutions cask system listing in the list of approved spent fuel storage casks was published in the Federal Register on November 14, 2001 (66 FR 56982). This action allows the W74 cannister to be placed in the transfer cask until the storage cask is repaired or replaced and clarifies the description of the other non-fissile material that may be stored in the cannister. The direct final rule becomes effective January 28, 2002.

The companion proposed rule to this direct final rule was published in the Federal Register on November 14, 2001 (66 FR 57002). The comment period closes December 14, 2001.

Standards for Combustible Gas Control Systems in Light-Water-Cooled Power Reactors (Part 50)

A document announcing the availability of draft wording of a possible amendment to NRC's regulations that set standards for combustible gas control systems in light-water-cooled power reactors was published in the Federal Register on November 14, 2001 (66 FR 57001). The contemplated amendments would be based on experience gained from a fundamental reevaluation of the need for the regulation, the application of risk insights, and the incorporation of performance-based concepts to the extent possible. Comments should be submitted by December 31, 2001.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the Period of November 9, 2001 through November 15, 2001:

Vacancy announcement no. 0148020, Senior On-Site Licensing Representative, application forms of named individual. (FOIA/PA-2002-0045)

Bethlehem Steel, Johnstown, Cambira County, PA, all licenses and related documents authorizing the possession and/or use of radioactive materials, and all inspection and violation records. (FOIA/PA-2002-0046)

Cabot Performance Materials, Inc., Revere, Bucks County, PA, all documents related to the development or approval of the decommissioning plan, related risk assessment and radiological assessment. (FOIA/PA-2002-0047)

Hatch plant, safety study which was expected to be published in October 2001 and the most recent decommissioning plan. (FOIA/PA-2002-0048)

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Arrivals		
BLADEY, Cindy	REGULATIONS SPECIALIST	ADM
HOPKINS, Jay*	TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTRUCTOR	HR/TTC
KOLB, Timothy	OPERATIONS EXAMINER	RII
MUNOZ, Richard	HEALTH PHYSICIST	RIV
ROYAL, Judith	HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	RI
THOMPSON, James	HEALTH PHYSICIST	RIV

*Transferring from RIII to TTC

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Media Interest

There was media interest in the emergency preparedness exercise at Wolf Creek nuclear plant.

A report issued by Greenpeace calling for the shutdown of the nation's nuclear plants received press coverage.

Entergy's plans to install a gas-fired turbine generator at the Indian Point nuclear plant received media attention.

Decisions by several governors to scale back the presence of National Guard troops at nuclear power plants generated media interest.

There was media interest in NRC's comments provided to the Department of Energy regarding the adequacy of information on a possible proposed high-level waste repository at Yucca Mountain.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
01-128	NRC Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste To Meet November 27 - 29 in Rockville, Maryland
01-129	NRC Submits Comments to Doe on Yucca Mountain Information
Regions:	
II-01-045	NRC Commissioner to Visit St. Lucie Nuclear Plant November 16
II-01-046	NRC Commissioner to Speak on Nuclear Security At University of Florida on November 17

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Visit of Senior Regulators from East Europe and Russia

A group of nine senior regulators from Eastern Europe and Russia visited NRC November 5-7, 2001 to study NRC's Reactor Oversight Process (ROP). The visit was sponsored by the IAEA Technical Cooperation Department. Detailed presentations covered the origins of the ROP program from its predecessor, the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) process. Risk-informed insights were included in the presentations, in consideration of the IAEA-sponsored Workshop on Risk-Informed Decision Making, taking place at NRC at the same time. Following the meetings at Headquarters, the regulators traveled to Region III and the D.C. Cook Nuclear Power Plant for detailed discussions on the ROP process from the Region and utility perspectives.

Dr. Jozsef Ronaky, Director General of the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority (HAEA), was a participant at this meeting. Taking advantage of his presence, a small signing ceremony was held on November 6th to complete the renewal of the NRC-HAEA information exchange and general cooperation Arrangement.

Visit of Dr. Keiji Kanda From Kyoto University

Dr. Keiji Kanda, from Kyoto University's Research Reactor Institute in Japan, met with the Office of International Programs representatives on November 13, 2001 to share his perspectives on matters associated with the Reduced Enrichment for Research and Test Reactors program. He also addressed future plans under consideration for Kyoto University's Research Reactor.

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SRM on SECY-01-0153, 01-0180, 01-0181	11/14/01	Affirmation Session on November 14, 2001, SECY-01-0153 - International Uranium (USA) Corp. White Mesa Uranium Mill Review of LBP-01-15; SECY-01-0180 - Private Fuel Storage (Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation) Docket No. 72-22-ISFSI; Review of LBP-01-19, 53 NRC 416 (May 31, 2001); SECY-01-0181 - U.S. Enrichment Corp.; Pace's Petition for Review of Director's Decision on the Paducah Upgrade Amendment
Information Papers		
1. SECY-01-0201	11/9/01	SECY-01-0201 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending November 2, 2001

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Congress dated November 13, 2001, concerns preliminary comments regarding a possible geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada provided to DOE.

2. Letter to Robert G. Card, DOE, dated November 13, 2001, provides preliminary comments regarding a possible geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

3. Letter to Paul Leventhal, and Dr. Edwin Lyman, Nuclear Control Institute, dated November 5, 2001, responds to expressed reservations about the NRC's Safeguards Performance assessment Pilot Program.

4. Letter to Fletcher Newton Power Resources Inc., dated November 2, 2001, concerns NRC fees for in-situ leach facility.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes; Call for Nominations.

2. ACRS Subcommittee Meeting on Planning and Procedures; Notice of Meeting.

3. Meeting of the ACRS Subcommittee on Reliability and Probabilistic Risk Assessment; Notice of Meeting.

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Permagrain Products, Inc.

Region I received a licensing request to approve the relocation of the Permagrain Products, Inc. irradiator from the current central Pennsylvania location to a nearby site in Frenchville, PA. Permagrain irradiates plastic impregnated wood in sealed tanks underwater to produce a durable flooring at this irradiator. Relocation of the irradiator, which will take about a year, will facilitate the decommissioning and release for unrestricted use of the current Permagrain location, which has been designated as an Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP) site.

Three Mile Island Unit 1 (TMI-1)

Senator Arlen Specter, Congressman Gekas, and others including State and local officials toured the TMI-1 site on Monday, November 12, 2001. Jack Skolds (AmerGen's CEO and COO) was the senior ranking AmerGen official present. AmerGen gave a short presentation to the group. A press conference was held following the tour at the licensee's training facility.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 16, 2001

Commissioner Nils J. Diaz Visits Florida Power and Light Company's St. Lucie Nuclear Plant

On November 16, 2001, Commissioner Nils J. Diaz, accompanied by the Acting Regional Administrator, visited the St. Lucie nuclear plant in Jensen Beach, Florida to tour the plant, and meet with licensee management and resident inspectors.

Tennessee Valley Authority - Watts Bar Management Meeting

On November 15, 2001, representatives from Tennessee Valley Authority were in the Regional office to attend a management meeting. The purpose was to discuss Watts Bar plant performance, INPO insights and refueling outage plans.

NRR Risk Informed Focus Group Meeting

On November 13, 2001, the NRR Risk Informed Focus group meeting was held in the Region II office in the Main Conference Room. The purpose was to solicit feedback regarding the agency's risk informed process.

Senior Manager's Review Team Meeting

On November 13-14, 2001, the Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety attended a Senior Manager's Review Team meeting in Headquarters to review a draft of the first of several consolidated guidance documents for decommissioning.

Federal Women's Program (FWP) Administrative Initiative Counterpart Meeting

On November 14-15, 2001, the Region II FWP representatives attended the Federal Women's Program Administrative Initiative Counterpart Meeting in Headquarters.