

February 8, 1982

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TO ALL LICENSEES OF OPERATING PLANTS, APPLICANTS FOR AN OPERATING LICENSE, AND HOLDERS OF CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Gentlemen:

Subject: Nuclear Power Plant Staff Working Hours (Generic Letter No. 82-02)

The Commission has issued the attached policy statement on factors causing fatigue of operating personnel at nuclear reactors. It is being sent to you at this time for your information.

As part of the implementation of this policy statement, we are revising Regulatory Guide 1.33 and NUREG-0737 (Item I.A.1.3) to reflect the policy. In addition, we will be requesting all licensees to revise the administrative section of their technical specifications to require that administrative procedures follow the policy statement guidelines and that authorized deviations to the working hours guidelines be documented and available for NRC review. We will be contacting each licensee by separate letter once the Regulatory Guide and NUREG 0737 revisions have been completed (presently estimated for March 1982).

Original signed by
Darrell G. Eisenhut

Darrell G. Eisenhut, Director
Division of Licensing

Enclosure: Policy Statement

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POLICY ON FACTORS CAUSING FATIGUE OF OPERATING
PERSONNEL AT NUCLEAR REACTORS

Licensees of operating plants and applicants for operating licenses shall establish controls to prevent situations where fatigue could reduce the ability of operating personnel to keep the reactor in a safe condition. The controls should focus on shift staffing and the use of overtime--key job-related factors that influence fatigue.

The objective of the controls would be to assure that, to the extent practicable, personnel are not assigned to shift duties while in a fatigued condition that could significantly reduce their mental alertness or their decision making capability. The controls shall apply to the plant staff who perform safety-related functions (e.g., senior reactor operators, reactor operators, health physicists, auxiliary operators, and key maintenance personnel).

Enough plant operating personnel should be employed to maintain adequate shift coverage without routine heavy use of overtime. However, in the event that unforeseen problems require substantial amounts of overtime to be used, on a temporary basis, the following guidelines shall be followed:

- a. An individual should not be permitted to work more than 16 hours straight (excluding shift turnover time).
- b. An individual should not be permitted to work more than 16 hours in any 24-hour period, nor more than 24 hours in any 48-hour period, nor more than 72 hours in any seven day period (all excluding shift turnover time).
- c. A break of at least eight hours should be allowed between work periods (including shift turnover time).
- d. The use of overtime should be considered on an individual basis and not for the entire staff on a shift.

Recognizing that very unusual circumstances may arise requiring deviation from the above guidelines, such deviation shall be authorized by the plant manager or his deputy, or higher levels of management. The paramount consideration in such authorization shall be that significant reductions in the effectiveness of operating personnel would be highly unlikely.

In addition, procedures are encouraged that would allow licensed operators at the controls to be periodically relieved and assigned to other duties away from the control board during their tour of duty.