

March 17, 1992

Abstract

READINESS REVIEWS IN THE HIGH-LEVEL WASTE PROGRAM

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The need for U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licensees to conduct "readiness reviews," defined as formal assessments of readiness to proceed to the next critical phase of a project or process, was identified in NUREG-1055 "Improving Quality and the Assurance of Quality in the Design and Construction of Nuclear Power Plants," published in May 1984. In response to this identified need, the Georgia Power Company proposed a readiness review pilot program for Plant Vogtle, and the NRC agreed to participate in this program. An NRC assessment of the effectiveness of the pilot program at Vogtle Unit 1, which concluded that the program provided significant added assurance that licensing commitments and NRC regulations had been adequately implemented, is given in NUREG-1278 "Vogtle Unit 1 Readiness Review," published in September 1987.

The criteria for a readiness review program was included in Revision 1 to the "U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Review Plan for High-Level Waste Repository Quality Program Descriptions," issued in December 1988. A commitment to plan, perform and document readiness reviews for major quality affecting activities that are critical or complex in nature is contained in the U. S. Department of Energy, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management (OCRWM) "Quality Assurance Requirements Document," DOE/RW-0214, Revision 4, issued September 1990, and accepted by the NRC in November 1991.

Several readiness reviews of quality affecting activities have been conducted by OCRWM and its program participants, and observed by NRC personnel. These readiness reviews appear to be effective in identifying areas requiring further attention prior to the beginning of work, and providing added assurance that quality assurance program requirements will be met.

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