

INFORMATION REPORT

December 15, 2003

SECY-03-0212

For: The Commissioners
From: William M. Dean, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: SECY-03-0212 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK
ENDING DECEMBER 5, 2003

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*No input this week.

/RA/

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Assistant for Operations, OEDO

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12/15/03

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WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 5, 2003

The Weekly Information Report is compiled by the Office of the EDO and includes highlights of Headquarters and Regional Office activities.

Contact: M. Markley, OEDO by E-mail: mtm@nrc.gov.

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*No input this week

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Quad Cities Unit 1 - Completion of Steam Dryer Repair Outage

During the steam dryer outage that began on November 12, 2003, Exelon inspected, repaired, and modified the steam dryer, repaired damaged electromatic relief valve actuators and modified their supports. The licensee installed additional vibration and monitoring equipment on piping and components to help in the analysis of the effects of extended power uprate (EPU) operation. In its lost parts analysis and operability evaluation for the missing piece of the steam dryer, Exelon determined that the missing piece was most likely broken into at least three pieces by the 'B' recirculation pump impeller and then swept into the bottom head region of the reactor vessel. Exelon's evaluation concluded that it was safe to operate without retrieving the missing pieces until the next refueling outage by which time a decision will be made to either locate and retrieve the pieces or evaluate continued operation without retrieval.

Quad Cities Unit 1 was brought on-line on November 30, 2003, and returned to pre-EPU full power on December 1, 2003. Exelon is currently limiting power to pre-EPU full power while they develop a power ascension and test program to gather and analyze data up to EPU power. Licensee activities continue to be monitored closely by NRC Region III and the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR).

Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Unit 2 (VEGP-2) - Issuance of Exigent Amendment

On December 3, 2003, the Division of Licensing Project Management issued an exigent Technical Specifications amendment to VEGP-2. The amendment extended the surveillance interval for conducting the Train B Memories Test (31-day staggered test) portion of the Actuation Logic Test for nuclear instrumentation, safety injection, and feedwater isolation to the next refueling outage at the end of operating Cycle 10 (Spring 2004) or the next VEGP-2 shutdown to Mode 5, whichever comes first. This action is related to Notice of Enforcement Discretion 03-6-004 that NRR granted, with Region II concurrence, on November 4, 2003.

Dominion Generation - Meeting with NRC Staff

On December 3, 2003, the Division of Licensing Project Management staff met with licensing representatives from Dominion Generation at Dominion Headquarters near Richmond, VA. The purpose of the meeting was to review current licensing process issues including communications, correspondence quality, combined licensing submittals, expectations for risk-informed submittals, handling of sensitive documents, generic communications, Generic Letter (GL) 91-18 on operability determinations and the resolution of degraded and nonconforming conditions, Notices of Enforcement Discretion, and the Technical Specification Authority File review process. The licensee expressed concern regarding the lack of guidance on handling of sensitive documents and insufficient follow-up communications on submittals made in response to generic communications. The staff responded to these concerns and discussed follow-up actions and processes.

Presentation to Hungarian Regulators Regarding Reliable Handling of Heavy

On December 3, 2003, Division of Systems Safety and Analysis staff presented information regarding reliable handling of heavy loads to members of the Hungarian Atomic Energy Agency (HAEA). This was one of several presentations the Office of International Programs scheduled with the HAEA representatives during the week of December 1, 2003. Discussions also included technical exchanges on approaches to damaged fuel recovery at Hungarian nuclear power plants.

Meeting with Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) Regarding Risk-informed Inservice Inspection Programs

On December 2, 2003, the NRC staff held a public meeting with representatives of the Nuclear Energy Institute, Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), Westinghouse Owners Group (WOG), and other interested stakeholders at NRC headquarters to discuss the characteristics of "living programs" for risk-informed inservice inspection (ISI) programs. Industry representatives described the risk-informed ISI living program philosophy and NEI's proposed guidance to maintain risk-informed ISI programs. The guidance is expected to address expedited, periodic, and ten-year evaluations. The ten-year evaluations will accompany the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code ten-year interval updates. Two types of evaluations are envisioned, screening reviews and program updates, depending on the amount of new information that has been accumulated. A final draft of NEI's guidance document is expected to be available by the end of January 2004. NEI plans to offer the document to the NRC for comment but does not plan to request formal review and endorsement.

Operator Licensing Meeting with Industry Focus Group

On November 25, 2003, the Division of Inspection Program Management staff and representatives from the Operator Licensing Branch Chief from each NRC Regional Office, held a public meeting with the Industry Focus Group on operator licensing. The industry requested the meeting to review issues related to Draft Revision 9 of NUREG-1021, "Operator Licensing Examination Standards for Power Reactors," before the public comment period closes on December 31, 2003. The major discussion topics included the "shelf life" of the generic fundamentals examination, Senior Reactor Operation (SRO) written examination sample plan, limits on repeating walk-through test materials on successive examinations, and criteria for grading the simulator operating test.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Drop-in Visit by the Vice President of Envirocare

On December 4, 2003, the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards (FCSS), Office of State and Tribal Programs staffs met with the Senior Vice President, Envirocare of Utah, Inc. Discussions focused on withdrawal of Envirocare's application to accept high-radium activity byproduct material from the Department of Energy's (DOE's) Fernald, Ohio, facility at the Envirocare disposal facility in Clive, Utah. Envirocare explained that because of recent publicity on the application, the Utah Legislative Waste Task Force recommended that the Governor and the Legislature approve any increase in the level of radioactivity of material accepted by Envirocare. Envirocare agreed to follow the Task Force recommendation, which would have resulted in an early 2005 date as the soonest that Envirocare could begin to accept the waste. Envirocare noted that DOE considered this date too late for the initiation of Fernald waste shipments. Consequently, Envirocare withdrew its application.

Public Meeting on Mallinckrodt Site Decommissioning Plan

On December 2, 2003, NRC staff conducted a public meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, to provide members of the public an opportunity to comment on the Mallinckrodt, Inc. Phase 2 decommissioning plan. The meeting was attended by approximately 25 members of the public, including representatives from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and local television and radio stations. Most public comments were related to the possible health effects caused by living next to, or working at, the Mallinckrodt facility, when the plant was producing weapons-grade material for the Manhattan Engineering District and later the Atomic Energy Commission from 1942 to 1960. Few questions and comments dealt explicitly with Phase 2 decommissioning issues. Participants expressed views concerning release of the Mallinckrodt site for unrestricted use even the 25 mrem/yr release criteria is met. The staff plans to reconcile public comments, including those identified during this meeting, during its review of the decommissioning plan.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Implementing Agreement on Thermal-Hydraulic Code Applications and Maintenance between the NRC and the Comissao Nacional de Energia Nuclear (CNEN) of Brazil (Brazilian Nuclear Energy Commission)

On November 21, 2003, the Executive Director for Operations (EDO) signed an Implementing Agreement between the NRC and CNEN. On November 25, 2003, the proposed agreement was forwarded to CNEN for counter-signature. This Implementing Agreement defines the terms and conditions by which the CNEN will continue their participation in the cooperative research program with the NRC in the Thermal-Hydraulic Code Applications and Maintenance Program (CAMP) on the basis of mutual benefit and reasonable equity and reciprocity. The work performed and exchanged under this Implementing Agreement is expected to enhance the quality of the reactor safety codes through the expansion of the international user community, and through their subsequent applications and feedback. These codes are used by the NRC for auditing calculations as part of the licensing review process for applications such as power uprates, emerging safety issues, and for advanced reactor design reviews. CNEN will also provide a cash contribution each year to the CAMP program. If approved, the Implementing Agreement will remain in effect for a period of five years.

Agreement between the NRC and Statens Karnkraftinspektion, The Swedish Nuclear Power Inspectorate (SKI) Concerning Participation in the UANRC Program of Severe Accident Research

On November 25, 2003, the EDO signed a international agreement between the NRC and SKI. This Agreement defines the terms and conditions by which the NRC and SKI will continue their cooperation in the area of severe accident research on the basis of mutual benefit and reasonable equity and reciprocity. The work performed under this Agreement will contribute to verifying the accuracy of the NRC's severe accident codes. The work will also enhance the quality of our reactor safety codes through the expansion of the international user community. These codes are used by the NRC to evaluate potential risk and vulnerability scenarios for severe accidents and address regulatory licensing issues for operating plants. SKI will also provide a cash contribution each year for the duration of this Agreement. If approved, this Agreement will remain in force for a period of three years.

Public Meeting on Mitigating Systems Performance Index (MSPI) Pilot Program

On December 3, 2003, a public meeting was held to discuss technical and implementation issues with the MSPI pilot. The RES and NRR staff discussed preliminary results regarding MSPI probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) adequacy, as well as comparisons between MSPI predicted results and those from the current Reactor Oversight Process (ROP). Discussions included differences between the licensees' plant PRA models and the SPAR models and potential impacts on MSPI results. Discussions also included bench marking of MSPI results, Significance Determination Process (SDP) findings, and current ROP Safety System Unavailability for component failures captured in the MSPI Pilot. The meeting was attended by participants from the NRC Regional Offices, industry organizations including Nuclear Energy

Institute and the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations, the news media, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and pilot plant licensees.

The proposed MSPI would monitor the performance of six mitigating systems based on their ability to perform risk-significant functions. The index, which approximates the change in core damage frequency, is comprised of two elements - system unavailability and system reliability. Plant-specific PRA models will be used to calculate the contribution of component failures and maintenance unavailability to the index.

Nuclear Security and Incident Response
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-I-03-033, Albert Einstein Healthcare Network, - POTENTIAL MEDICAL EVENT AT ALBERT EINSTEIN HEALTHCARE NETWORK.
2. PNO-IV-03-050, Crow Butte Resources, Inc. - MEDICAL TREATMENT OF A CONTAMINATED INDIVIDUAL AT A MEDICAL FACILITY.
3. PNO-IV-03-049, Swedish Medical Center - MEDICAL MISADMINISTRATION INVOLVING INTRAVASCULAR BRACHYTHERAPY.
4. PNO-III-03-044, Advocate Lutheran General Hospital - MEDICAL EVENT INVOLVING AN INTRAVASCULAR BRACHYTHERAPY PROCEDURE.

December 5, 2003

ENCLOSURE D

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Nuclear Energy Institute: Denial of Petition for Rulemaking (PRM-50-74)

A document denying a petition for rulemaking submitted by the Nuclear Energy Institute was published in the Federal Register on December 4, 2003 (68 FR 67811). The petitioner requested that the NRC amend its regulations governing emergency core cooling systems. The petitioner's suggested amendment would have allowed licensees the optional use of the 1994 American Nuclear Society heat decay standard and the use of any future NRC-approved revisions to that standard without additional rulemaking. The NRC is denying the petition because the regulations already include provisions for the use of best-estimate evaluation models by NRC licensees.

December 5, 2003

ENCLOSURE F

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Requests received during the period of
November 28 through December 4, 2003:

Criticality Accident Alarm System (Eberline detectors & signal alarms) performance tests as part of BLEU Project for Nuclear Fuel Services Inc.	FOIA/PA-2004-0064
Nuclear Materials Events Database (NMED)	FOIA/PA-2004-0065
Radiation Exposure Information Report System	FOIA/PA-2004-0066
NUREG-1150	FOIA/PA-2004-0067
Nuclear exports, China, 1984-1991, Referral by Department of State	FOIA/PA-2004-0068
10 CFR 40 Appendix A	FOIA/PA-2004-0069

December 5, 2003

ENCLOSURE G

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Arrivals		
Dariele Taswell	Secretary (OA)	HR/SPAC
James Downs	Fire Protection Engineer	NRR
Robert Radlinski	Fire Protection Engineer	NRR
James Hickey	Project Engineer	RII
Retirement		
Tommy Larry Bell	Sr. Project Manager	HR
Janette E. Copeland	Information Management Analyst	OCIO

December 5, 2003

ENCLOSURE I

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Media Interest

A *New York Times* report on NRC's proposed changes to fire protection rules at power plants was picked up by several newspapers around the country.

Widespread interest in the General Accounting Office (GAO) report that found owners of nearly one-third of the nation's commercial power reactors are not setting aside enough money to pay for the plant's cleanup after the end of their useful life.

Rising costs and a sluggish stock market have left Detroit Edison Co. with a \$9 million shortfall for continuing decommissioning activities at its dormant Fermi I nuclear plant in Michigan.

Federal approval for Southern California Edison to begin transporting a decommissioned reactor vessel from San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station by barge around South America to a disposal site in South Carolina.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
03-157	NRC Advisory Panel to Meet December 9 in Las Vegas on Licensing Support Network for High-Level Waste Repository (12/1)
03-158	NRC Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Rule Changes to Specialty Medical Board Certification Criteria (12/4)
03-159	NRC Renews Licenses for Catawba and McGuire Nuclear Power Plants for an Additional 20 Years (12/5)
Regions:	
I-03-072	Prehearing Conference Scheduled for December 11 in Case of Bucks County, Pa., Irradiator (12/4)
II-03-049	NRC to Hold Public Meeting on Farley Nuclear Station License Renewal (12/4)
III-03-071	NRC To Discuss Safety Significance Of Delay In Declaring An Emergency At Perry (12/3)
I-03-073	NRC Appoints New Resident Inspector at the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (12/5)
I-03-074	New NRC Senior Resident Inspector Assigned to Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant (12/5)
II-03-050	NRC Assigns New Senior Resident Inspector at Turkey Point Nuclear Power Plant (12/5)

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SRM-SECY-03-0200	12/3/03	Renewal of Full-Power Operating Licenses for McGuire Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2, and Catawba Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2
Commission Voting Record on 03-0200	12/3/03	(same)
Information Papers		
1. SECY-03-0207	12/03/03	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending November 21, 2003

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Congress, dated November 25, 2003, provides the September report on the status of NRC's licensing and regulatory duties and information on the status of the Davis-Besse NPP.
2. Letter to Congressman Eliot L. Engel, dated November 24, 2003, responds to request for NRC to thoroughly review the petition filed by the Union of Concerned Scientists and Riverkeeper, Inc.
3. Letter to Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey, dated November 24, 2003, responds to request for NRC to thoroughly review the petition filed by the Union of Concerned Scientists and Riverkeeper, Inc.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. NEI Denial of Petition for Rulemaking.
2. Part 35 - Medical Use of Byproduct Material - Recognition of Specialty Boards.
3. Call for Nominations for Position of Interventional Cardiology Physician.

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Indian Point Utility Workers' Union Strike Vote

On December 4, 2003, the Local 1-2 Utility Workers Union of America at Indian Point voted in favor of a strike, should the union and Entergy, the Indian Point licensee, not agree on a new contract for the Unit 3 union workers. The current contract for the Unit 3 workers expires on January 17, 2004. The Unit 2 union contract ends in June 2004. Both Unit 2 and 3 union workers participated in the strike vote and 367 of 396 votes (93 percent) favored the walkout.

Entergy has been developing a strike contingency plan and the Region I staff will review it when finalized. Region I also is developing a contingency plan for coverage of the licensee's operations, including initial 24-hour inspector coverage, should a strike occur.

Commissioner Merrifield Visit to Puerto Rico

Region I Director, Nuclear Materials Safety and an Atlanta-based Branch Chief accompanied Commissioner Merrifield and his Technical Assistant on a visit to Puerto Rico during the week of December 1, 2003. The Commissioner met with the Commonwealth's Secretary of Health and with representatives of the Puerto Rico Electric Power Association. Commissioner Merrifield toured the decommissioned BONUS reactor and museum and visited a nuclear pharmacy in San Juan, an irradiator and associated medical equipment production facility in Aibonito, and the Navy's former bombing range on the island of Vieques.

December 5, 2003

ENCLOSURE P

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Chairman Diaz Visits BWX Technologies, Inc. Facility

On December 2, 2003, Region II security staff supported the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR) activities at BWX Technologies in Lynchburg, Virginia. During the week, the Regional Administrator accompanied NRC Chairman during tours of the site and review of related NSIR activities.

Annual Emergency Preparedness Conference

On December 3-5, 2003, the State Liaison Officer participated in the Annual Emergency Preparedness Conference, sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, Regions I, II, and III, in Williamsburg, VA. Attendees included State and local government officials, other Federal department and agency representatives, and utility representatives.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 5, 2003

Meeting with San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors

On December 1, 2003, the Region IV Deputy Regional Administrator and other members of the staff met with members of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors. On December 2, 2003, they met with the editorial board of the San Luis Obispo Tribune News. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss regulatory matters involving the Diablo Canyon Power Plant.

Outreach Planning Conference with State and County Emergency Managers

On December 1-4, 2003, Region IV held an Outreach Training and Planning Conference in Mesa, Arizona, with emergency managers from state and counties in Region IV and nuclear power plant emergency planners. The conference was supported by participants from the NRC Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Centers for Disease Control, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Homeland Security.