

Access to Documents of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission After September 11, 2001

American Library Association
Federal Documents Task Force
January 19, 2002

The NRC and Access to Its Documents

- A tradition of over 25 years of making some 2.5 million documents available to the public:
 - At headquarters public document room
 - Local public document rooms
 - On FedWorld
 - On the NRC web page
 - Participation in the FDLP depository program

Collection Availability before October, 1999

- **Storage Media:** Documents were released to the public primarily in paper or 24x48x microfiche and placed in the Public Document Room (PDR)
- **Dissemination Vehicles:** former LPDRs located near existing power plants, FDLP, and sold through GPO and NTIS

Collection Availability Now

- **Access to current documents is now available** through the NRC web site any computer with Internet access at home, office, public library, or at the NRC's PDR.
- Also selected titles available through the sales programs of GPO, NTIS
- **Federal Depository Library Program**
- Selected databases (e.g. ES & T, INIS)

WW-15

The Release of Information to the Public

- NRC makes information available to the public allowing stakeholders to participate in NRC's regulatory process.
- Historically its intent has been to automatically make information available that is of interest to the public without the need to file a request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request

NRC FOIA Requests


- As a result of this policy of openness, the NRC routinely receives only 400 FOIA's annually
- The FOIA requests are usually for material that cannot be released anyway (privacy/safeguards information)

Ramifications of 9/11/01

- September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C.
- Concerns about nuclear-related facilities as possible targets
- Concerns about plant security from the public and the utilities
- Concerns about information availability

Systematic Agency Review Of Publicly Available Documents

- NRC web shut down
- Review of document requests given to PDR librarians
- Assistance from NRC technical staff
- Monitored access to collections in the PDR



Consequences of the Web Site Shutdown

- Calls from former LPDR/FDLP librarians seeking guidance
- Calls from utilities that own nuclear power plants requesting help
- Calls from the public looking for previously available information; calls and e-mails doubled
- Increased use of ADAMS, NRC's full text document management system for current documents plus selected retrofit files



NRC Web Site Returned on October 17, 2001

- A limited version made available in a new format
- Content previously available is continuing to be reviewed
- As the reviews progress, content is being added incrementally



NRC Documents in the Public Domain

- The NRC may recall some documents if it is believed that the contents of a document may pose a security threat
- The NRC may issue redacted versions of some documents
- Guidance from the NRC to FDLP libraries will be through the Superintendent of Documents



Assistance for Librarians

The PDR Stands Ready to Assist Librarians If They Have Questions

1-800-397-4209 or pdrc@nrc.gov