INFORMATION REPORT

June 28, 2004 SECY-04-0106

For: The Commissioners

From: William M. Dean, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO

Subject: SECY-04-0106 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING JUNE 18, 2004

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*No input this week.

/RA by Constance C. Schum Acting For/

William M. Dean
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
T. Kim, OEDO

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WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING June 18, 2004

The Weekly Information Report is compiled by the Office of the EDO and includes highlights of Headquarters and Regional Office activities.
Contact: T. Kim, OEDO by E-mail: TJK3@nrc.gov.

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*No input this week

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Public Meeting Regarding the Mitigating Systems Performance Index (MSPI)

On June 17, 2004, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) staff held the monthly public meeting regarding the MSPI. The staff stated that it had not yet received all of the internal stakeholder responses to its May 25, 2004, memorandum that requested identification of critical issues requiring resolution prior to the implementation of MSPI as an alternative to the current Safety System Unavailability (SSU) Performance Indicator (PI). The staff also stated that its goal was to have an agency position on these issues and how to proceed forward by the next monthly meeting scheduled for July 21, 2004. Industry led a discussion of implementation issues if the decision was made to proceed forward with the MSPI. This includes creation of a committee to work on a draft temporary instruction (TI), MSPI implementation guidance, a list of significant differences and assumptions that need to be resolved as a result of the standardized plant analysis risk (SPAR) upgrade and validation reviews for the pilot plants, as well as a sample MSPI basis document to be used in the public workshops.

Issuance of Revision to 10 CFR 50.48, “Fire Protection”

On June 16, 2004, NRC published a final revision to 10 CFR 50.48, “Fire Protection,” in the Federal Register (69 FR 33536). This rule allows current reactor licensees to adopt a set of risk-informed, performance-based fire protection requirements contained in the National Fire Protection Association Standard 805 as an alternative to the existing deterministic, prescriptive fire protection requirements. The final rule becomes effective July 16, 2004.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Louisiana Energy Services Uranium Enrichment Plant Prehearing Conference

On June 15, 2004, NRC staff attended a prehearing conference in Hobbs, New Mexico, to discuss proposed contentions raised on the Louisiana Energy Services' uranium enrichment plant proposed to be located in Eunice, New Mexico. Staff from the New Mexico Environment Department, New Mexico Attorney General's office, and Nuclear Information and Resource Service/Public Citizen presented their proposed contentions. Discussion followed the written filings made by the parties. The Atomic Safety and Licensing Board is scheduled to rule on the admissibility of these contentions by mid-July.

Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses Staff Presentation at CALPHAD (CALculation of PHAse Diagrams) in Krakow, Poland

On May 31-June 4, 2004, staff from the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (hereafter, the Center) attended an International Conference on Phase Diagram Calculations and Computational Thermochemistry. The Center staff presented a talk entitled "Phase Stability of Alloy 22 High-Level Waste Container Weldments: Experiments and Thermodynamic Calculations." The paper discussed results of recent work investigating the effects of fabrication processes on the material stability of Alloy 22, which is a proposed corrosion- resistant waste package material to be used in a potential geologic repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada.

Meeting on Clearance of Solid Materials

On June 15, 2004, a staff member from the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety participated in a panel discussion on the "Clearance of Solid Materials: Federal and Industry Update," at the 2004 American Nuclear Society annual meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Other panelists included representatives from the Department of Energy, Council of Radiation Control Program Directors, and various NRC licensees. Feedback from presentations and audience discussion was largely in favor of some kind of clearance approach. Participants provided the following reasons for why clearance and a codified regulatory approach are needed: (1) the need for filling a regulatory void; (2) the costs of managing such materials; (3) conservation of space at low-level waste facilities; (4) conservation (through recycling) of valuable resources; and (5) a reduction in risk and costs.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

International Workshop on Communication on Risk Reduction

An international workshop on "Communication on Risk Reduction" was held in Moscow, Russia, on June 7-9, 2004. The workshop was co-sponsored by the NRC and the Institute of Nuclear Safety (IBRAE) of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS). More than 50 participants including representatives from Russia, Austria, Belarus, France, Germany, Ukraine, and USA, shared information on approaches and methods for reducing risk and enhancing safety, and discussed associated cost and benefit considerations. While approaches for assessing cost and benefit of safety enhancements varied among different countries, the use of probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) results and insights appears to be a common key input for these assessments. Additionally, Russian representatives indicated that a new common regulatory system based on safety/risk concepts is under consideration for all Russian industries. They further indicated that information discussed at the workshop would be very useful to their Russian colleagues as safety/risk concepts become a key element in the Russian regulation.

Probabilistic Risk Assessment Workshop

On June 9, 2004, RES staff gave a presentation at the Region I Probabilistic Risk Assessment (PRA) Workshop in Coatesville, PA. The workshop involved both Region I staff and licensee PRA staff. The staff's presentation discussed the results of comparisons between the Standardized Plant Analysis Risk (SPAR) models and licensees' PRAs which were performed during the onsite quality assurance (QA) reviews of the Revision 3 SPAR models and the comparison exercise conducted with the pilot plants in the Mitigating Systems Performance Index (MSPI) development program. The staff also identified the major factors that have been determined to influence the differences observed between the SPAR model results and those obtained with the licensees' PRAs. The presentation led to detailed discussions of the Phase 3 analyses in the Significance Determination Process (SDP) and the recently undertaken Risk Assessment Standardization Project (RASP) effort being conducted jointly by NRR and RES.

NRC Public Meeting on External Events Probabilistic Risk Analysis Standard

On June 10, 2004, the RES staff held a public meeting on the development of Appendix C to Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.200, "An Approach for Determining the Technical Adequacy Of Probabilistic Risk Assessment Results For Risk-Informed Activities." Appendix C to RG 1.200 will provide the staff's regulatory position on the American National Standard (ANS) on external events probabilistic risk analysis methodology. The purpose of the meeting was to present the staff's preliminary observations and questions on this standard. The ANS representative attending the meeting indicated that the NRC staff's observations were useful and that ANS would continue to work with the staff to resolve questions. A second public meeting is scheduled for August 2, 2004. The staff expects to release the draft Appendix C for formal public review and comment by the end of August 2004.

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - Melt Coolability and Concrete Interaction (OECD-MCCI) Program

The fifth OECD-MCCI Program Review Committee (PRC) and Management Board (MB) meetings were held on June 2-4, 2004, at the Commissariat l'Energie Atomique (CEA) Cadarache Laboratory in France. Among the topics discussed at the meeting were the results of a two-dimensional core-concrete interaction test (CCI-1) and two small-scale water ingression and crust strength tests (SSWICS-5 and SSWICS-6), all conducted at the Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) within the past six months. The CCI-1 test was conducted to generate the two-dimensional concrete erosion data involving reactor core material. The data will be used to improve the core-concrete interaction model in NRC's severe accident computer code, MELCOR. The current model is based on one-dimensional experimental data, and is not capable of predicting the two-dimensional concrete erosion process in a reliable manner. The SSWICS tests are providing data for modeling water ingression as a means of cooling ex-vessel core debris. Future tests discussed at the meeting included a second core-concrete interaction test, the seventh SSWICS test (SSWICS-7) and the first melt eruption test (MET-1).

The OECD-MCCI Program is hosted and coordinated by NRC with participation by 13 OECD countries and by the U.S. Department of Energy. The outcome of the OECD-MCCI Program is expected to determine the efficacy of severe accident management strategy of flooding the reactor cavity in the unlikely event of a severe core damage accident that may lead to vessel failure and relocation of molten debris on the cavity floor. Results from water ingression, core-concrete interaction, melt eruption, and crust strength tests will be used to develop coolability models for incorporation into NRC's severe accident code.

USEC, Inc., Gas Centrifuge Workshop

On June 16, 2004, RES staff participated in a workshop at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, on gas centrifuge technology. The workshop involved presentations by recognized gas centrifuge experts, as well as tours of USEC's facilities. USEC, Inc., plans to submit an application for a commercial gas centrifuge plant in August 2004.

Nuclear Security and Incident Response
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-II-04-004A, Global Nuclear Fuels - Americas, LLC - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE TRANSPORTATION ACCIDENT INVOLVING SHIPMENT OF NUCLEAR FUEL ASSEMBLIES.

2. PNO-IV-04-012, Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station Units 1, 2, and 3 - COMPLETE LOSS OF OFFSITE POWER.

3. PNO-IV-04-012A, Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station Units 1, 2, and 3 - AUGMENTED INSPECTION TEAM (AIT) DISPATCHED TO PALO VERDE.

4. PNO-IV-04-012B, Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station Units 1, 2, and 3 - AUGMENTED INSPECTION TEAM (AIT) TO FINISH AT PALO VERDE.

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Licensing Proceeding for a High-Level Radioactive Waste Geologic Repository: Licensing Support Network, Submissions to the Electronic Docket (AH31- Part 2)

On June 14, 2004 (69 FR 32836), a final rule that amends the Commission's Rules of Practice was published in the Federal Register. The final rule addresses the use of the Licensing Support Network (LSN) and the electronic docket in the licensing proceeding on the disposal of high-level radioactive waste at a geologic repository. The amendments establish basic requirements and standards for submission of adjudicatory materials to the electronic docket by parties to the high-level radioactive waste licensing proceeding. The amendments also address the issue of reducing the unnecessary loading of duplicate documents on individual participant LSN document collection servers, the continuing obligation of LSN participants to update their documentary material, the Secretary of the Commission's determination that the Department of Energy licensing application is electronically accessible, and material that may be excluded from the LSN. The final rule becomes effective July 14, 2004.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

ADAMS User Group (AUG) Meets at NRC Headquarters

The ninth meeting of the Agencywide AUG was held on June 16, 2004. Approximately 14-16 AUG members and NRC staff participated in the meeting.

Agenda items, which were submitted in advance, included several issues related to the Web-based access to ADAMS, including the status of future system upgrades. Issues discussed included the extension of the current ADAMS Public Satisfaction Survey, packages in ADAMS, and problems with retrofit documents. There was also extensive discussion about title and name consistency in ADAMS documents. The next meeting of the AUG is set for January 12, 2005.

Freedom of Information Act and Privacy Act Requests Received During the Period of June 11 through June 17, 2004:

St. Francis Hospital, Jersey City, NJ, environmental assessment, all records	FOIA/PA-2004-0268
Parking Garage, 9th & Erie Streets, environmental assessment, all records	FOIA/PA-2004-0269
Florida Power & Light, all NRC records including telephone conversation notes between named individual & NRC staff, re: employment discrimination	FOIA/PA-2004-0270
Service water valve pit flooding problem, memos from K.V. Seyfrit to F. J. Long dated 1-17-78 and from G. Lainas to B. Grimes dated 7-31-79	FOIA/PA-2004-0271

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Arrivals		
Erin L. Alexander	Student Engineer (Summer)	ACRS
La'toya Cooper	Student Clerk (Summer)	NMSS
Craig Gerardi	Student Engineer (Co-Op)	RES
Teresa R. Mixon	Secretary (OA)	NMSS
Robert B. Pittman	Student Clerk (Summer)	NMSS
Mollie Rock	General Engineer (NSPDP)	NRR
Robert E. Schenter	ACMUI Consultant	NMSS
Adam T. Taff	Student Engineer (Summer)	NMSS

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Media Interest

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) handled significant media inquiries on the following:

An unusual event at Palo Verde nuclear plant in Arizona that caused all three reactors to shut down.

A transformer fire at Vermont Yankee, which also prompted declaration of an unusual event.

Inquiries from the Cleveland Plain Dealer regarding videotape of the Davis-Besse reactor head corrosion. (Report published 6/20.)

Other OPA Items of Interest

OPA staff assisted at public meetings at Point Beach and Catawba, as well as a pre-hearing on a proposed uranium enrichment plant in New Mexico.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
04-073	NRC Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste to Meet June 22-24 in Rockville, Maryland (6/14)
04-074	NRC to Hold Public Meeting June 17 to Discuss Risk-Informed Approach to Reactor Containment Sump Issue (6/14)
04-075	NRC Seeks Topics for Upcoming 17th Annual Regulatory Information Conference (6/15)
04-076	NRC Publishes Alternative Fire Protection Rule (6/17)
Regions:	
III-04-038	NRC to Discuss Perry Inspection Findings with FirstEnergy Officials (6/16)
IV-04-024	NRC Sends Augmented Inspection Team to Palo Verde (6/15)

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. COMSECY-04-0031	6/4/04	Rulemaking to Revise the License Termination Rule
SRM on COMSECY-04-0031	6/14/04	(same)
Commission Voting Record on COMSECY-04-0031	6/14/04	(same)
2. SRM on SECY-04-0073	6/14/04	Survey to Measure Openness
Commission Voting Record on SECY-04-0073	6/14/04	(same)
Information Papers		
1. SECY-04-0097	06/15/04	SECY-04-0097 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending June 4, 2004
Memoranda		
1. M040615	6/15/04	Staff Requirements -Affirmation Session: I. SECY-04-0095 - Request to Export up to 140 Kilograms of Weapons-Grade Plutonium Oxide (PuO2) to Cogema's Cadarache and Melox Facilities in France (XSNM03327)

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, meeting notice - 514th meeting (07/07-09/04).

2. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, Subcommittee Meeting on Planning and Procedures (07/06/04).

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Salem and Hope Creek

The NRC conducted the annual assessment meeting with Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSEG) for the Salem and Hope Creek stations on June 16, 2004. The meeting also included discussions of the results of three assessments PSEG had undertaken to review the work environment at the Salem and Hope Creek stations, as well as PSEG's plans for improving that environment.

PSEG stated that it is developing a comprehensive plan to improve not only the work environment, but also the corrective action and work management programs. PSEG corporate officers reiterated a commitment to dedicate needed resources to improve the material condition of the facilities as well as the work environment; to docket a description of its action plan by June 25, 2004; to periodically meet with the NRC to discuss progress, and conduct periodic assessments to measure improvement.

Following the meeting with PSEG, State and local officials and members of the public were offered an opportunity to ask questions of the NRC staff. Those comments included requests that the units be shut down.

Vermont Yankee (VY) Missing Fuel Investigation

A Region I inspector was on site the week of June 14, 2004 to follow the licensee's investigation into the missing fuel rod segments from VY. Entergy completed in-pool inspections and continues to review records and interview personnel for the investigation. Entergy expects to complete its investigation report by the end of July, with the root cause analysis report to follow. NRC plans to conduct a special inspection of the licensee's investigation beginning August 2, 2004. Entergy submitted an Licensee Event Report (LER) describing the known details related to the missing fuel segments, including radionuclide content. The LER revised the size of the smaller of the two segments from a previously reported 7 inches (based on plant records from the 1979-80 period) to 9 inches. This change was due to more accurate measurement of the piece of the fuel rod remaining in the VY spent fuel pool. Representatives of the NRC Office of the Inspector General were also on site this week observing portions of the inspection.

Buffer Zone Protection Plan Survey

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is developing a program to provide local law enforcement agencies (LLEA) with the response tools to provide better security support to nuclear power plant security forces. On July 16-17, 2004, DHS, the Pennsylvania State Police and other LLEA conducted a pilot Buffer Zone Protection Plan Survey at the Limerick Generating Station. The product of the pilot will be used as a model Buffer Zone Protection Plan Survey to be conducted at all other nuclear power plants in the future.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

Nuclear Fuel Services, Inc., Facility Tour

On June 15, 2004, the Deputy Regional Administrator accompanied the Director of the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, to Nuclear Fuel Services, Inc., in Erwin, Tennessee. The purpose of the visit was to tour the facility and meet with licensee management and the resident inspector.

Commissioner Merrifield Visits St. Lucie Facility

On June 14, 2004, the Director, Division of Reactor Safety, accompanied Commissioner Merrifield to the St. Lucie Facility in Jensen Beach, Florida. The purpose of the visit was to tour the facility and meet with licensee management and the resident inspector.

Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity Management Training

On June 16, 2004, a representative from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the NRC's Affirmative Employment and Diversity Program Manager, were in the Region II Office to conduct the Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Management Refresher Training for Managers and Supervisors.

Office of Congressional Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 18, 2004

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 63					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	
Portner	TENTATIVE Week of 06/21/04	TBA	Markup	FY2005 Energy and Water Development Appropriations	Senators I Energy an Appropriat
Keeling	06/22/04 2154 RHOB	10:00	DOE	Energy Dept. and Nuclear Security Requirements	Reps. Sha National S Internatio Governme
Keeling	06/23/04 2141 RHOB	10:00	Markup	H.R. 2934, increase criminal penalties related to terrorist murders, including crimes involving nuclear sabotage	Reps. Se Judiciary
Combs	06/24/04 2123 RHOB	9:30	Markup	H.R. 3981, Nuclear Waste Fund Fees	Reps. Ba Energy a
Combs	TBA 2154 RHOB	TBA	TBA	Federal Information Technology R&D	Reps. Bu Human R Governm