June 30, 2005

The Honorable George V. Voinovich, Chairman
Subcommittee on Clean Air, Climate Change,
and Nuclear Safety
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, House Reports 108-554 and 108-792, directed the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and other regulatory activities. The initial reporting requirement arose in the FY 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. On behalf of the Commission, I am pleased to transmit the seventy-eighth report, which covers the month of May 2005. I am also providing more recent information in this cover letter in order to keep you fully and currently informed of NRC's licensing and regulatory activities.

The previous report provided information on a number of significant activities. These activities included: (1) termination of the special panel established by the NRC to provide substantially increased regulatory oversight of the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Plant, returning the monitoring of the facility to an expanded version of the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process, and (2) approval of new regulations that require specific licenses for the export or import of radioactive materials that could be used in so-called "dirty bombs" or other terrorist weapons.

I would like to update you on the status of power uprate activities. Since June 23, 2004, the staff approved power uprates for five nuclear power plant units, resulting in a combined increase of approximately 245 megawatts-electric (MWe). This brings the total number of power uprates approved since 1977 to 105, resulting in a combined increase of approximately 4417 MWe to the Nation's electric generating capacity. The staff is currently reviewing power uprates for 11 nuclear power plant units. If approved, these power uprates would result in a combined increase of an additional 905 MWe to the Nation's electric generating capacity. In January 2005, the staff conducted a survey of all licensees to obtain information regarding their plans for submitting power uprate applications over the next 5 years. Based on this survey and information obtained since the survey, licensees plan to request power uprates for 28 nuclear power plant units over the next 5 years. If approved, these power uprates would result in an increase of about 1379 MWe. Based on the results of the January 2005 survey and the models the staff developed for reviewing power uprates, approximately 24 full-time equivalent staff will be used for reviewing the power uprates expected over the next 5 years.

Concerning our efforts to restore documents to our Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), on June 17, the staff completed the restoration of approximately 70,000 non-docket documents in the ADAMS Public Library. Members of the public are now able to access these documents, involving administrative, contractual, research,

and other documents not related to a specific licensee, which were removed from the public library on October 25, 2004, as part of the sensitive-information screening project's review of publically available documents.

Recently, the agency also accomplished the following:

- issued, on June 16, 2005, the final safety evaluation report for an early site permit at the North Anna site in Louisa County, Virginia, about 40 miles northwest of Richmond. A final decision on the early site permit application is expected in mid-2006 after receipt of a report from the NRC's independent Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, issuance of the NRC staff's final Environmental Impact Statement, and the conclusion of an NRC Atomic Safety and Licensing Board hearing on the application.

- published in the Federal Register on June 8, 2005 (70 FR 33533), a notice of acceptance for docketing of the application and opportunity for hearing regarding renewal of the operating license for the Palisades Nuclear Plant. The plant is located 5 miles south of South Haven, Michigan, and its current operating license expires on March 24, 2011. If the license renewal application is approved, it would allow the licensee to operate the plant for an additional 20 years.

- dispatched, on June 6, 2005, a special inspection team to continue the review of security at Seabrook Station. The NRC team was tasked with following up on NRC-identified findings from an inspection conducted in May.

- disapproved on June 1, 2005, publication of a proposed rule on radiological criteria for controlling the disposition of solid materials. The Commission deferred this rulemaking for the time being because the NRC is currently faced with several high priority and complex tasks, because the current approach (which is to review cases on an individual basis) is fully protective of public health and safety, and because the rate at which nuclear power plants are being decommissioned has decreased.

- conducted on May 18, 2005, the fifth quarterly management meeting with Louisiana Energy Services (LES) to discuss management issues related to the uranium enrichment facility proposed to be located in Lea County, New Mexico. Issues discussed included the status of the licensing review and Environmental Impact Statement preparation. The final Environmental Impact Statement and Safety Evaluation Report for the proposed gas centrifuge uranium enrichment plant were published in June 2005. The reports conclude that the environmental impacts would be small to moderate and can be mitigated, and that the application meets the agency's health and safety requirements.

- issued, on May 2, 2005, Temporary Instruction (TI) 2515/163, "Operational Readiness of Offsite Power." The objective of the TI is to confirm, through inspections and interviews, the operational readiness of off-site power systems in accordance with NRC requirements. The staff will provide the Commission preliminary results of the inspections, including any significant corrective actions or compensatory measures taken by licensees in response to the inspections, by the end of July.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Commissioner Jaczko did not participate in the development of this letter to the extent it deals with the Yucca Mountain project.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz

Enclosure:
Monthly Status Report on the Licensing Activities
and Regulatory Duties of the U.S. NRC, May 2005

cc: Senator Thomas R. Carper

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable George V. Voinovich, Chairman
Subcommittee on Clean Air, Climate Change,
and Nuclear Safety
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Thomas R. Carper

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Rick Boucher

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Harry Reid

The Honorable David L. Hobson, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Peter Visclosky

The Honorable James M. Inhofe, Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator James Jeffords

The Honorable Joe Barton, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative John D. Dingell

MONTHLY STATUS REPORT ON THE LICENSING ACTIVITIES AND REGULATORY DUTIES OF THE UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

MAY 2005

Enclosure

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[1]Note: The period of performance covered by this report includes activities occurring between the first and last day of May 2005. The transmittal letter to Congress accompanying this report may provide more recent information in order to keep Congress fully and currently informed of NRC's licensing and regulatory activities.

I Implementing Risk-Informed Regulations

The staff continues to make progress on tasks involving the use of probabilistic risk information in many areas; however, there were no reportable milestones scheduled or completed during the month of May 2005. The Commission is continuing to consider the staff's proposal to risk-inform 10 CFR 50.46, "Acceptance Criteria for Emergency Core Cooling Systems for Light-water Nuclear Power Reactors."

II Revised Reactor Oversight Process

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) continues to implement the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) at all nuclear power plants. The NRC continues to meet with interested stakeholders on a periodic basis to collect feedback on the efficacy of the process and consider the feedback in future ROP refinements. Recent activities include the following:

1. On May 4, 2005, the staff held the annual Agency Action Review Meeting (AARM). This meeting of senior Headquarters and regional managers involved discussions on several reactor and materials licensees with significant performance issues.

2. On May 18, 2005, NRC hosted the monthly public meeting on the Mitigating Systems Performance Index (MSPI) at the NRC Headquarters office. Meeting attendees discussed the status of industry's ongoing study that will group similar important plant attributes in order to identify outliers relative to monitored MSPI components and/or systems. The staff discussed how it plans to disposition unresolved issues prior to full MSPI implementation.

3. On May 19, 2005, NRC hosted the monthly public meeting on the ROP at the NRC Headquarters office. Meeting participants discussed Significance Determination Process (SDP) issues; the status of the Scrams with Loss of Normal Heat Removal and the Reactor Coolant System Leakage performance indicator (PI) task forces; efforts to improve the Safety System Functional Failure PI; credit for licensee identified findings; and PI frequently asked questions.

4. On May 25, 2005, the Commission was briefed by the staff in a public meeting on the results of the AARM. During the briefing, NRC staff made presentations on the annual ROP self-assessment report, material and waste performance trends, reactor trends, and reactor and material licensees with significant performance issues.

5. On May 31, 2005, NRC participated in a Bilateral Technical Exchange Meeting between NRC and visitors from the Taiwan Atomic Energy Council. The staff presented an overview of the ROP framework and a more detailed discussion of the development and implementation of the process, including inspection, SDP, assessment, and enforcement.

III Status of Issues in the Reactor Generic Issue Program

In May 2005, a technical analysis of generic safety issue GSI-197, “Iodine Spiking Phenomena” was completed. This issue calls for the development of a mechanistic understanding of iodine spiking phenomena that would enable licensees’ calculations of iodine concentration to more accurately reflect existing plant operations and the capabilities of modern fuel rods to prevent coolant contamination. An NRC panel met in May 2005 to screen the issue. The panel’s findings are expected in June 2005.

IV Licensing Actions and Other Licensing Tasks

Operating power reactor licensing actions are defined as orders, license amendments, exemptions from regulations, relief from inspection or surveillance requirements, topical reports submitted on a plant-specific basis, notices of enforcement discretion, or other actions requiring NRC review and approval before they can be implemented by licensees. The fiscal year (FY) 2005 NRC Performance Plan incorporates three output measures related to licensing actions -- number of licensing actions completed per year, age of the licensing action inventory, and size of licensing action inventory.

Other licensing tasks for operating power reactors are defined as licensee responses to NRC requests for information through generic letters or bulletins, NRC responses to 10 CFR 2.206 petitions, NRC review of generic topical reports, responses by the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation to regional requests for assistance, NRC review of licensee 10 CFR 50.59 analyses and final safety analysis report updates, or other licensee requests not requiring NRC review and approval before they can be implemented by licensees. The FY 2005 NRC Performance Plan incorporates one output measure related to other licensing tasks -- number of other licensing tasks completed.

In FY 2004, several high priority activities, such as power grid reliability, changes to nuclear facility security plans, safeguards contingency plans, and guard force training and qualification plans, resulted in the NRC reprogramming resources to accommodate the additional work. One of the programs affected by the reprogramming of resources was operating power reactor licensing actions. As a result, at the end of FY 2004, the size of the licensing action inventory exceeded the goal of less than or equal to 1000, and the goal of competing at least 96 percent of the licensing actions in less than or equal to one year was not met. The effects of the reprogramming will continue into FY 2005 and FY 2006. The licensing actions inventory and timeliness goals for FY 2005 will be changed. Additional resources will be allocated in FY 2006 to work down the inventory and improve timeliness to meet the original timeliness and inventory goals.

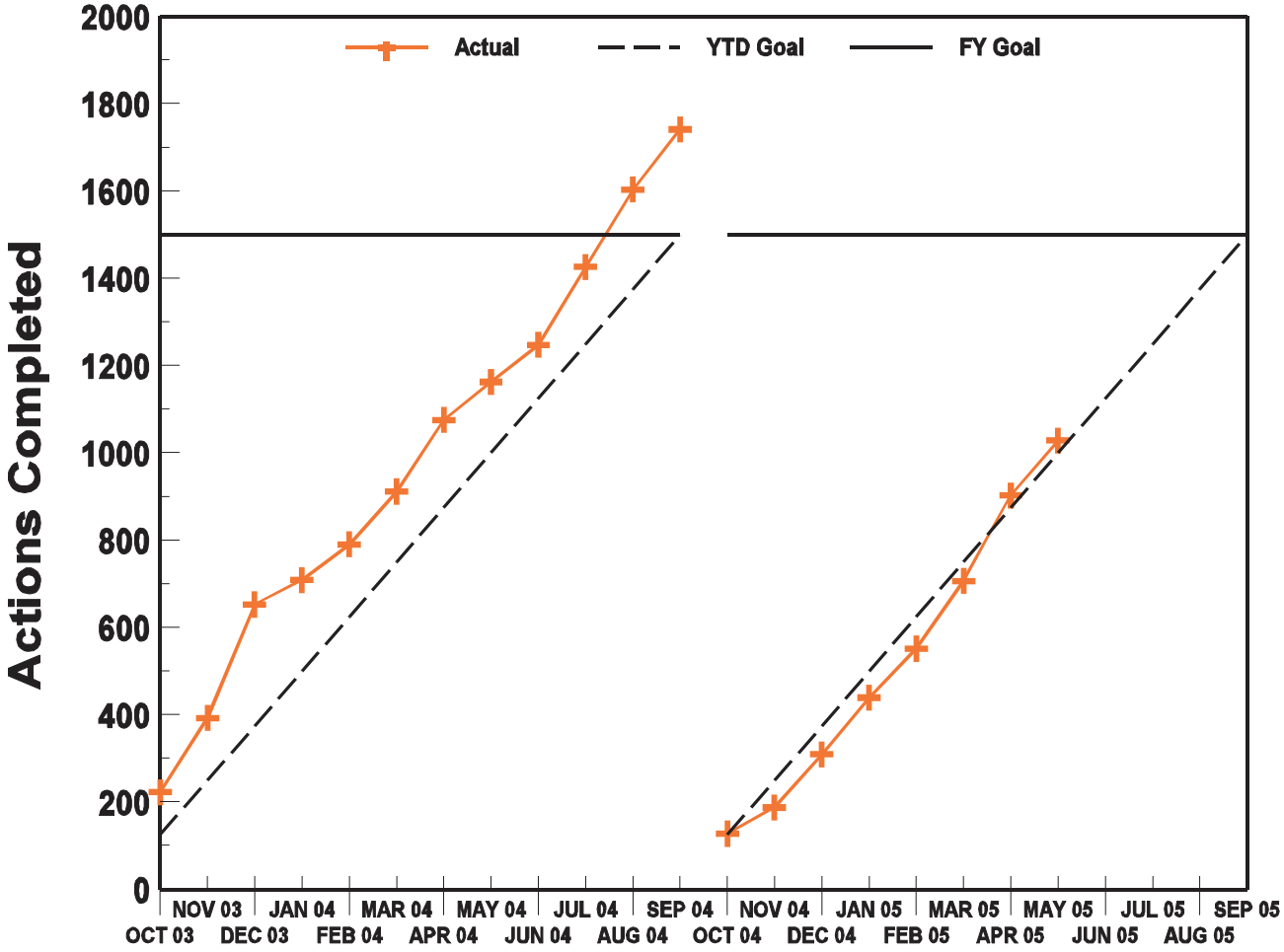
The actual FY 2003 and FY 2004 results, the FY 2005 goals, and the actual FY 2005 results, as of May 31, 2005, for the four NRC Performance Plan output measures for operating power reactor licensing actions and other licensing tasks are shown in the table below.

PERFORMANCE PLAN				
Output Measure	**FY 2003 Actual**	**FY 2004 Actual**	**FY 2005 Goals**	**FY 2005 Actual (thru 05/31/2005)**
Licensing actions completed/year	1774	1741	$ 1500	1028
Age of licensing action inventory	96% # 1 year; and 100% # 2 years	91%# 1 year; and 100% # 2 years	90% # 1 year; and 100% # 2 years	81# 1 year; and 99 % # 2 years
Size of licensing action inventory	1296	1135	# 1200	1219
Other licensing tasks completed/year	500	671	$ 500	394

The charts on the pages that follow demonstrate NRC's FY 2005 trends for the four operating power reactor licensing action and other licensing task output measure goals:

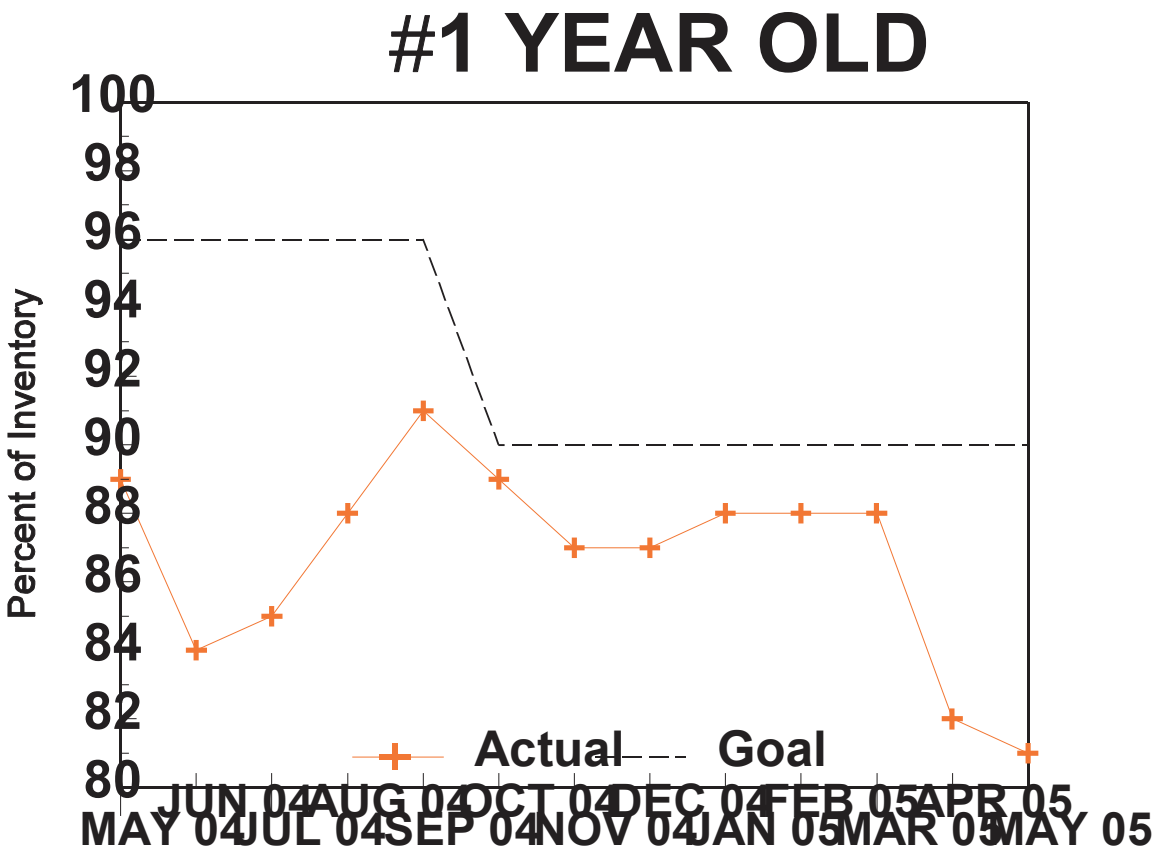
Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reactor Licensing

Performance Plan Target: Completed Licensing Actions



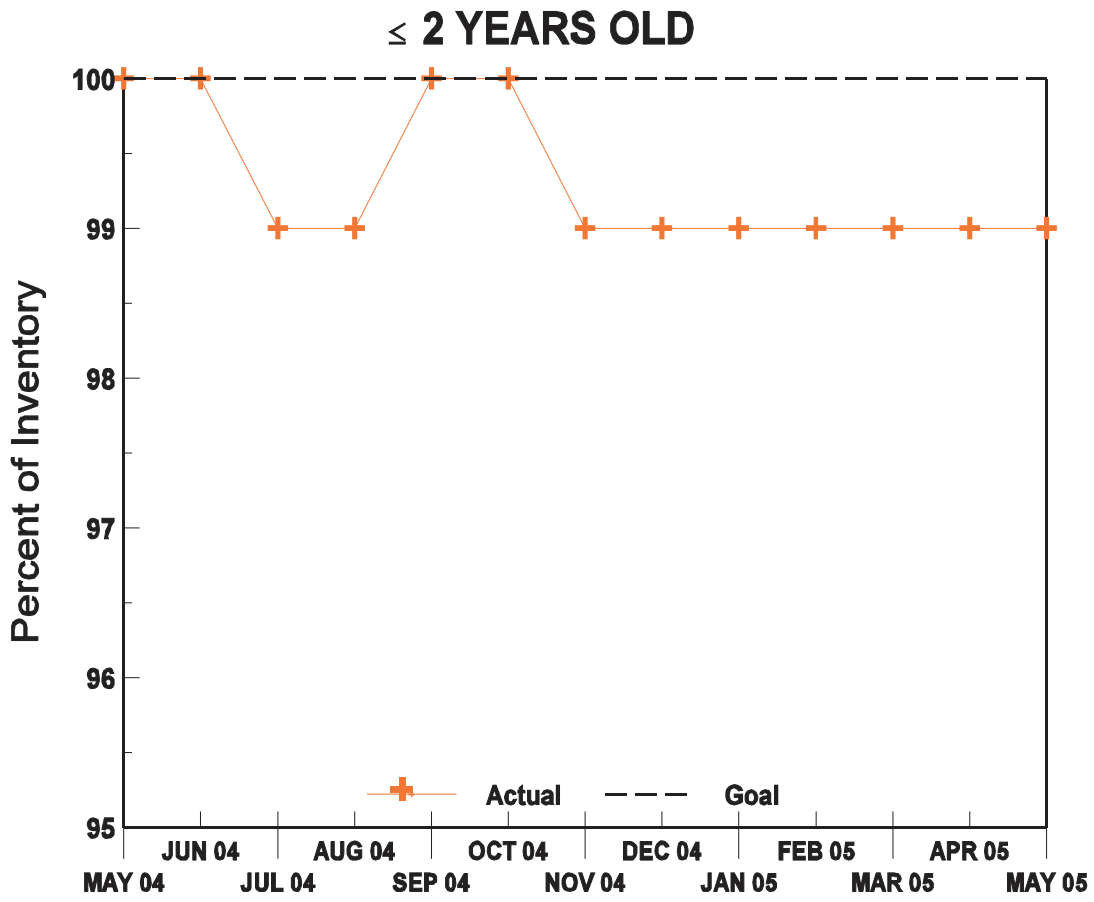
Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reacto

Performance Plan Target: Age of Licensing Action Inventory



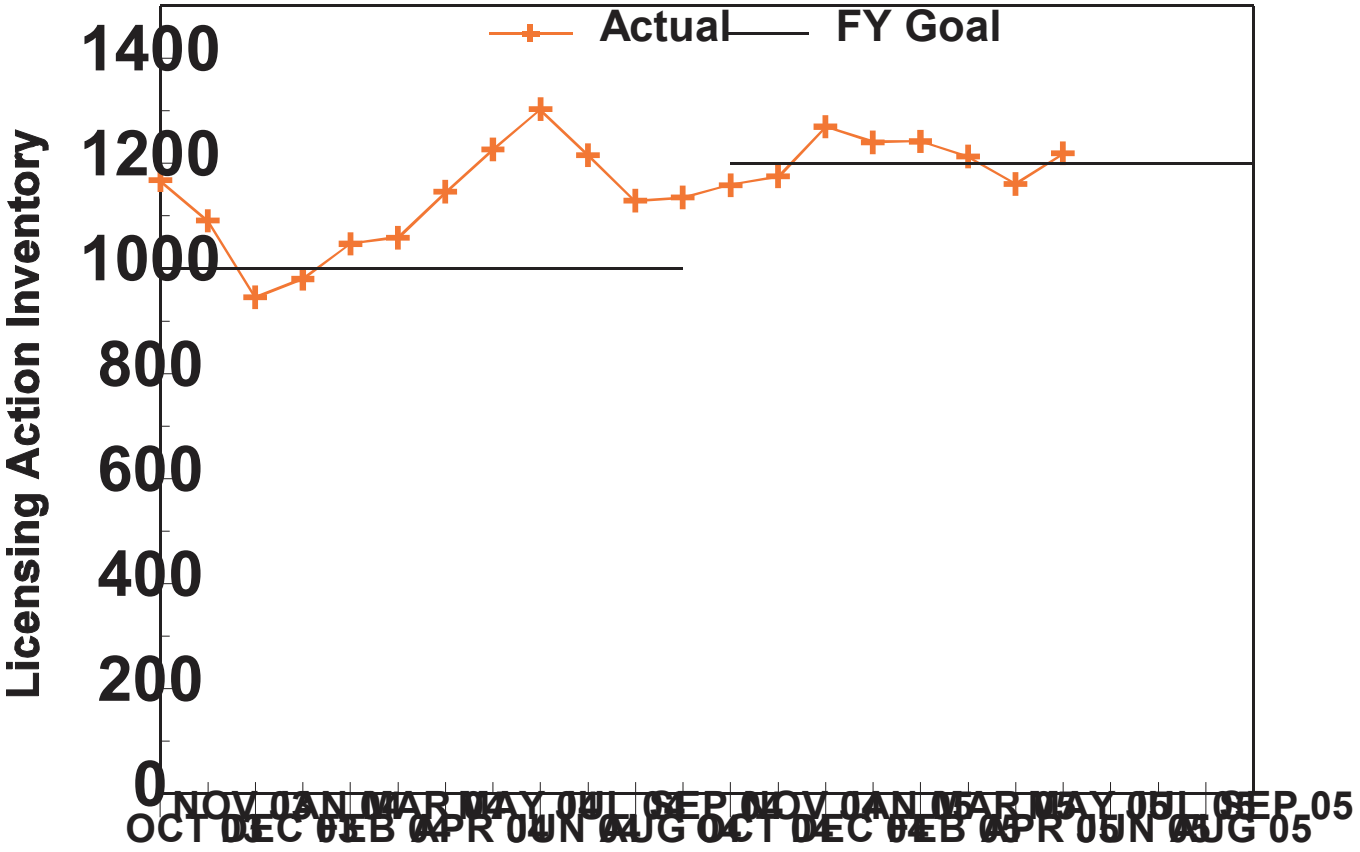
Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reactor Licensing

Performance Plan Target: Age of Licensing Action Inventory

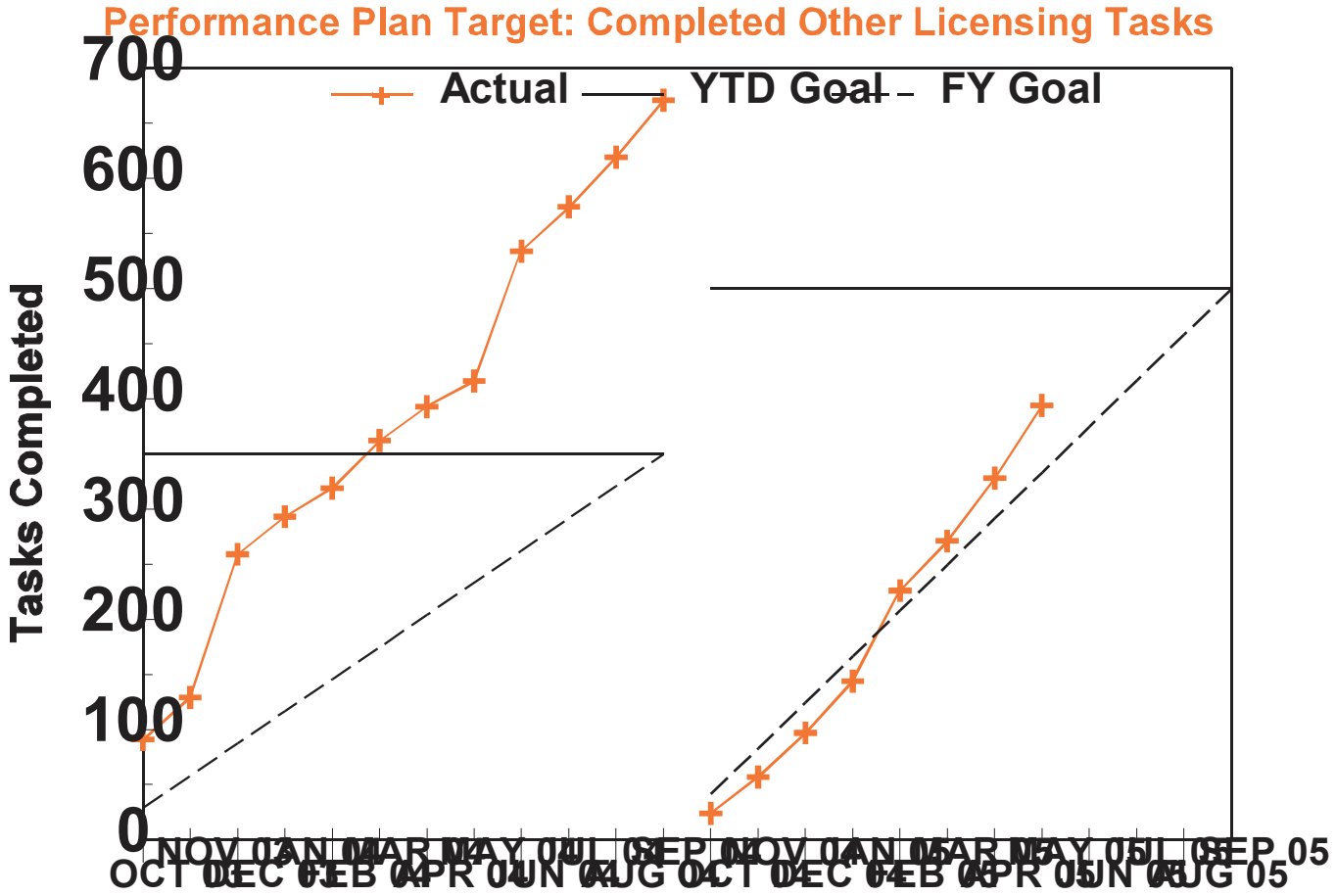


Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reac

Performance Plan: Size of Licensing Action Inventory



Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reac



V Status of License Renewal Activities

Farley, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The renewed licenses for Farley, Units 1 and 2, were issued on May 12, 2005, completing the review of the license renewal application 20 months after receipt.

Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 2, License Renewal Application

The staff issued the final supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) and the safety evaluation report (SER) in April 2005. The staff is completing activities to support a decision on renewing the licenses in July 2005.

DC Cook, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The staff issued the final SEIS in April 2005 and the SER in May 2005. The staff is completing activities to support a decision on renewing the licenses in September 2005.

Browns Ferry, Units 1, 2, and 3, License Renewal Application

The draft SEIS was issued for public comment in December 2004, and the staff is addressing the comments received. The final SEIS is scheduled to be issued in July 2005. The draft SER, which will identify any remaining open items, is scheduled to be issued in August 2005.

Millstone, Units 2 and 3, License Renewal Application

The draft SEIS was issued for public comment in December 2004, and the staff is addressing the comments received. The final SEIS is scheduled to be issued in July 2005. The draft SER identifying any remaining open items was issued in February 2005. The applicant's responses to the open items were received in April 2005 and the staff is preparing to issue the SER in August 2005. A petition for late intervention and request for hearing was submitted in February 2005, and an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board has been established to preside over the proceeding.

Point Beach, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The draft SEIS was issued for public comment in January 2005, and the staff is addressing the comments received. The final SEIS is scheduled to be issued in July 2005. The draft SER identifying remaining open items, was issued in May 2005.

Nine Mile Point, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The review of the Nine Mile Point license renewal application is on hold. The application was submitted in May 2004, and the staff had been reviewing the application. The applicant was informed that the responses to the staff's requests for additional information and the applicant's level of support were not adequate, and the applicant requested that the review be placed on hold in order to address the issues. Assuming a satisfactory submittal and adequate support

from the applicant for staff review activities, the staff will resume the review and establish a new schedule to accommodate the additional time needed to complete the application review.

Brunswick, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The Brunswick license renewal application is currently under review, and the staff is preparing requests for additional information. The draft SEIS is scheduled to be issued in September 2005, and the draft SER, which will identify any remaining open items, is scheduled to be issued in December 2005.

Monticello License Renewal Application

On March 24, 2005, the NRC received an application for renewal of the operating license for the Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant. The staff has completed its acceptance review and found the application acceptable for docketing and review. A 30-month review schedule has been established with a final decision on issuance of the renewed license scheduled for September 2007 to accommodate the potential for a hearing.

Palisades License Renewal Application

On March 31, 2005, the NRC received an application for renewal of the operating license for the Palisades Nuclear Plant. The staff is currently performing the required acceptance review of the application and, if found acceptable, will docket the application, notice an opportunity for hearing, and issue the review schedule.

VI Status of Review of Private Fuel Storage, Limited Liability Corporation's Application for a License to Operate an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation on the Reservation of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians

Litigation continues on the application by Private Fuel Storage, LLC (PFS) for a license to construct and operate an independent spent fuel storage installation on the Reservation of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians in Skull Valley, Utah. As noted in previous monthly update, on February 24, 2005, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) issued its decision on the aircraft crash issue in favor of the applicant, finding that the probability of an F-16 aircraft crash accident or ordnance impact into the facility that would result in a release of radioactive materials is less than 1×10^{-6} /yr (one in one million per year). Also on February 24, 2005, the ASLB ruled that the State of Utah's late-filed Contention UU, alleging that the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) will not accept spent nuclear fuel from the proposed facility, lacked adequate factual foundation and was inadmissible.

On February 28, 2005, the Commission offered the parties an opportunity to comment on whether the Commission should direct issuance of an immediately effective license to PFS. The parties filed their comments. Also, the State of Utah filed a motion with the ASLB for reconsideration of the ASLB's ruling on the aircraft crash issue and a petition for Commission review of the ASLB's decision on Utah's late-filed contention regarding DOE acceptance of spent nuclear fuel from PFS. On April 6, 2005, the ASLB held oral arguments on the State's motion for reconsideration and, on May 24, 2005, affirmed its earlier decision. Any petition for review of the ASLB's aircraft crash decision is due to be filed by June 13, 2005.

VII Enforcement Process and Summary of Reactor Enforcement by Region

Reactor Enforcement Actions						
		Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	TOTAL
Severity Level I	May 05	0	0	2	0	2
	FY 05 YTD Total	0	0	2	0	2
	FY 04 Total	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 03 Total	0	0	0	0	0
Severity Level II	May 05	0	0	2	0	2
	FY 05 YTD Total	0	0	2	0	2
	FY 04 Total	0	1	0	0	1
	FY 03 Total	0	0	0	0	0
Severity Level III	May 05	0	0	1	0	1
	FY 05 YTD Total	0	1	3	1	5
	FY 04 Total	1	2	4	0	7
	FY 03 Total	2	0	4	0	6
Cited Severity Level IV or GREEN	May 05	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 05 YTD Total	1	0	0	0	1
	FY 04 Total	1	0	2	2	5
	FY 03 Total	1	0	2	1	4
Non-Cited Severity Level IV or GREEN	May 05	44	6	35	35	120
	FY 05 YTD Total	187	133	186	217	723
	FY 04 Total	271	175	290	301	1037
	FY 03 Total	211	164	253	184	812

* Numbers of violations are based on enforcement action tracking system data that may be subject to minor changes following verification. The numbers shown as Severity Level I, II, III or IV refer to the number of Severity Level I, II, III, and IV violations or problems. The monthly totals generally lag by 30 days due to inspection report and enforcement development.

Escalated Reactor Enforcement Actions Associated with the Reactor Oversight Process						
		Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Total
Notices of Violation Related to RED, YELLOW, or WHITE Findings	May 05 RED	0	0	0	0	0
	May 05 YELLOW	0	0	0	0	0
	May 05 WHITE	0	0	2	0	2
	FY 05 YTD Total	3	1	2	1	7
	FY 04 Total	3	4	7	6	20
	FY 03 Total	6	1	7	1	15

Description of Significant Actions Taken During March 2005

FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company (Davis-Besse) EA-04-231 - On May 5, 2005, a Notice of Violation was issued for a violation associated with a White SDP finding involving the failure of the emergency planning zone (EPZ) sirens. The violation cited the licensee's failure to implement the means to provide early notification and clear instruction to the populace within the plume exposure pathway EPZ.

Nuclear Management Company, LLC (Kewaunee) EA-05-021 - On May 5, 2005, a Notice of Violation was issued for a violation associated with a White SDP finding involving the licensee's inability to close the containment equipment hatch rapidly during cold shutdown conditions due to an interference. The violation cited the inadequate design of the rail system that was installed in the containment to facilitate the reactor vessel head replacement activities. In addition, the licensee did not develop or have in place procedures or plans to effect a rapid removal of the interior portion of the steel rail system to eliminate the interference and allow expeditious hatch closure should it become necessary to do so.

Exelon Generating Company (LaSalle) EA-04-170 - On May 2, 2005, a Notice of Violation and Proposed Imposition of a Civil Penalty in the amount of $60,000 was issued for a willful Severity Level III violation involving four contract employees who violated radiation protection procedures associated with entry into high radiation areas.

VIII Power Reactor Security Regulations

In response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the NRC and the nuclear industry have taken many actions to ensure the security at nuclear power plants. A series of Advisories, Orders, and Regulatory Issue Summaries have been and, as needed, continue to be issued to strengthen further the security of NRC-licensed facilities and control of nuclear materials. The latest advisory, which addressed fraudulent use of Social Security numbers, was issued on March 23, 2005.

Orders were issued on April 29, 2003, to supplement the threat against which individual power reactor licensees and category I fuel cycle facilities must be able to defend (design basis

threat), limit the number of hours that security personnel can work, and enhance training and qualification requirements for security personnel. All licensees implemented the Orders by October 29, 2004.

Orders were issued on October 23, 2003, to all nuclear reactor licensees and research reactor licensees that transport spent nuclear fuel. The licensees subject to the Order have been issued a specific license by NRC authorizing the possession of spent nuclear fuel and a general license authorizing the transportation of spent nuclear fuel in a transport package approved by the Commission in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and 10 CFR Parts 50 and 71. The staff began implementation of a revised baseline inspection program to oversee the enhanced security requirements and the higher threat level. Inspection efforts are focusing on verifying implementation of the revised security plans.

In March 2003, the NRC initiated a pilot program for full force-on-force exercises, which used expanded adversary characteristics that were developed as a result of the increased post 9/11 threat. The purpose of the force-on-force exercises is to assess and improve, as necessary, performance of defensive strategies at licensed facilities.

To enhance the realism and effectiveness of the force-on-force exercises, the NRC has established fitness and training standards for mock adversary force personnel. Application of these standards provides assurance that the mock adversary force has received appropriate training in offensive tactics and is a credible and challenging adversary. The NRC retains responsibility for oversight of the mock adversary force and evaluation of licensee performance. In addition, measures have been established to minimize any possibility for a conflict of interest with respect to responsibilities for physical protection. To date, mock adversary force personnel have performed adequately in the force-on-force exercises they have participated in.

The NRC continues to support the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Homeland Security Council (HSC) initiative to enhance integrated response planning for power reactor facilities. The staff is continuing to work with HSC, DHS, Federal Bureau of Investigation and others to develop plans to address recommended actions. Additionally, the NRC completed six imminent aircraft threat announced walk-throughs with nuclear power plant licensees, and lessons learned have been incorporated into a Safeguards Advisory. Walk-throughs are scheduled to resume in September 2005, following updates to licensees' implementing procedures and NRC review of those procedures.

The staff is also developing Emergency Action Levels (EAL) specifically for events involving credible imminent threats. The EAL development program includes plans to coordinate issues with other agencies and state and local governments.

IX Power Uprates

The staff has assigned a high priority to power uprate license amendment reviews. The staff considers power uprate applications among the most significant licensing actions and is, therefore, conducting power uprate reviews on accelerated schedules.

There are three types of power uprates. A measurement uncertainty recapture (MUR) power uprate is a power uprate of less than 2 percent and is based on the use of more accurate

feedwater flow measurement techniques. Stretch power uprates are power uprates that are typically on the order of less than 7 percent and are within the design capacity of the plant. Stretch power uprates require only minor plant modification. Extended power uprates (EPUs) are power uprates beyond the design capacity of the plant and, thus, require major plant modification.

Licensees have been applying for and implementing power uprates since the 1970s as a way to increase the power output of their plants. The staff has been conducting power uprate reviews since then and, to date, has completed 105 such reviews. Approximately 13,250 megawatts-thermal (4,417 megawatts-electric) or an equivalent of about four nuclear power plant units has been gained through implementation of power uprates at existing plants. The NRC staff currently has 11 plant-specific power uprate applications under review. The 11 applications under review include 3 MUR power uprates, 2 stretch power uprates, and 6 EPUs.

In January 2005, the staff completed a survey of nuclear power plant licensees to obtain information regarding the industry's plans related to power uprate applications. Based on this survey, licensees plan to submit power uprate applications for 28 nuclear power plant units in the next 5 years. Planned power uprates are expected to result in an increase of about 4,139 megawatts-thermal (1,379 megawatts-electric).

X Status of the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station

Interim reports to be provided in September 2005, March 2006, and September 2006.

XI New Reactor Licensing

The NRC expects to license the next generation of new light water reactor nuclear power plants using Part 52 to Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, (10 CFR Part 52). 10 CFR Part 52 governs the issuance of standard design certifications, early site permits, and combined licenses for nuclear power plants.

Design Certifications

General Electric (GE) is scheduled to submit its design certification application for the Economic and Simplified Boiling Water Reactor design during the summer of 2005. The reactor design review and accompanying rule issuance is scheduled to take 42 - 60 months to complete.

The NRC staff and Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR), (Pty.) Ltd. will be holding a public meeting on June 30, 2005, to discuss planning for the PBMR pre-application review, including the proposed focus topics, desired outcomes, review approach, schedule and resource aspects.

Early Site Permits (ESP)

The staff is currently reviewing three ESP applications. Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC, submitted an ESP application in September 2003 for its North Anna site, located in Louisa County, Virginia. The final SER for the North Anna ESP is scheduled to be issued in June 2005, and the final EIS is scheduled to be issued in August 2005.

Exelon Generation Company, LLC submitted an ESP application in September 2003, for its Clinton site, located in Harp Township, DeWitt County, Illinois. The staff issued the draft SER for the Clinton ESP on February 10, 2005, and the draft EIS on March 2, 2005. The final SER is scheduled to be issued in August 2005, and the final EIS is scheduled to be issued in October 2005.

System Energy Resources Inc. (SERI) submitted an ESP application, in October 2003, for its Grand Gulf site, located in Claiborne County, Mississippi. On May 16, 2005, the staff met with the ESP Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards regarding the staff's safety review of the SERI ESP application. SERI also briefed the Subcommittee. The Full Committee is scheduled to meet with the staff and the applicant on June 2, 2005. On June 28, 2005, the NRC is holding a public meeting in Port Gibson, Mississippi, to discuss the draft EIS for Grand Gulf, which was issued on April 21, 2005. The final SER is scheduled to be issued in October 2005, and the final EIS is scheduled to be issued in December 2005.

In addition to the three ESP applications under staff review, the staff anticipates the submission of an ESP application from Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) during the summer of 2006. SNC has not indicated for which site it will request an ESP.

Combined License

On May 20, 2005, NuStart Energy Development LLC announced that they had narrowed down their list of potential sites for a new reactor to six commercial or DOE sites. The candidates sites are Tennessee Valley Authority's unfinished Bellefonte; Entergy's Grand Gulf and River Bend; DOE's Savannah River Site; and Constellation Energy's Calvert Cliffs and Nine Mile Point.

Regulatory Infrastructure

On May 4, 2005, the NRC staff hosted a public workshop at NRC Headquarters to support the development of the new reactor Construction Inspection Program by exploring with stakeholders the definition of 'material to an inspection, test, analysis, and acceptance criteria. The public workshop was attended by 50 people from the NRC, the industry and the public.

The NRC meet with Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) on May 5, 2005, to discuss NEI 04-01, Revision D, "Draft Industry Guideline for Combined License Applicants Under 10 CFR Part 52," and the review of operational programs in a combined license application. Specifically, NEI presented information on instrumentation and control design acceptance criteria and implementation of operational programs after a combined license is issued.