INFORMATION REPORT

March 27, 2006 SECY-06-0067

For: The Commissioners

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

Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING MARCH 17, 2006

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*No input this week.

/RA/
William M. Dean
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
L. Rakovan, OEDO

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03/27/06	03/27/06

WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING MARCH 17, 2006

The Weekly Information Report is compiled by the Office of the EDO and includes highlights of Headquarters and Regional Office activities.
Contact: L. Rakovan, OEDO by E-mail: ljr2@nrc.gov.

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*No input this week

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Technical Meeting with Boiling Water Reactor Vessel and Internals Project (BWRVIP)

On March 14, 2006, the staff and a representative from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory met with representatives of the BWRVIP in a public meeting at NRC Headquarters to discuss various issues with respect to the staff's review of several BWRVIP topical reports. The technical discussions were productive in addressing various issues related to the staff's review of the BWRVIP topical reports. In addition, a session was held whereby the BWRVIP executives provided an overview of the BWRVIP program to NRR management.

NRR/BWRVIP Management Meeting

On March 15, 2006, NRR senior management met with members of the BWRVIP Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) in a public meeting at NRC Headquarters to discuss the status of the BWRVIP program, the successes and challenges for the staff and the BWRVIP with respect to BWRVIP topical report reviews, and the forecast of upcoming BWRVIP topical report submittals for fiscal years 2006 and 2007. In addition, a member of the BWRVIP EOC provided an update of the Hatch Nuclear Plant, Unit 1, tie rod issue. This discussion included a background of the tie rods, Hatch Unit 1 inspection results, interim root cause assessment, significance for other tie rod plants, expectation of shroud redundancy, and future actions.

NRC Issues Letter on Proposed Technical Specification Changes Relating to Control Room Envelope Habitability

On March 10, 2006, the staff issued a letter to industry containing a set of markups to the Standard Technical Specifications and a draft safety evaluation to illustrate the NRC's position on proposed changes to Control Room Envelope (CRE) habitability. NRC safety concerns include exceeding unfiltered air in-leakage limits, that if they are not remedied within the Technical Specifications (TS) completion time, would necessitate a plant shutdown. The staff will meet with Technical Specification Task Force (TSTF) members to provide industry opportunity for comment in mid-April 2006. The path forward is to review and approve Revision 3 of TSTF-448, which will provide TS changes that all licensees can adopt to address CRE habitability issues.

Public Meeting on Proposed Rule to Update 10 CFR Part 52

On March 14, 2006, the staff held a public workshop in the Two White Flint North auditorium to discuss the proposed rule to amend Part 52, which was published on March 13, and to facilitate stakeholder comments. Over 100 representatives from the Nuclear Energy Institute, nuclear power plant licensees, vendors, law firms representing nuclear power reactor licensees, and NRC staff attended the workshop. The staff explained the proposed requirements and answered stakeholder questions.

Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) Thermal-Hydraulic Subcommittee Meeting - ESBWR Stability Method

On March 14, 2006, the staff, its contractors, and General Electric (GE) met with the ACRS Thermal-Hydraulic Subcommittee regarding the application of the TRACG computer code to ESBWR stability. During a previous meeting on this topic on January 19, 2006, subcommittee members raised questions regarding the identification of the dominant phenomena, the qualification of TRACG for this application, and the nodalization scheme used by GE. The subcommittee was satisfied with the supplemental presentations provided by the staff, its contractors, and GE. All of the issues raised by the subcommittee at the previous meeting have now been resolved. A full committee meeting on this topic has been tentatively scheduled on April 6, 2006.

Brunswick - Public Meeting on Transitioning to a New Fuel Vendor

On March 10, 2006, a Category 1 public meeting was held at NRC headquarters among the NRC staff, representatives of Carolina Power & Light Company (the licensee for Brunswick Steam Electric Plant, Units 1 and 2), and Framatome ANP (the fuel vendor for new fuel at the plant). The purpose of the meeting was to initiate communications regarding the transition process and licensing submittals required to accomplish a safe and efficient transition from the current GE 14 Fuel to Framatome ANP's Atrium-10 fuel. The licensee was told that licensing submittals and analyses to support the new fuel in a mixed core would need to be made timely to allow the NRC staff a year's review time. The reviews and approvals would be needed to support the spring 2008 refueling outage.

Alternate Source Term (AST) Reviews

On March 7, 2006, the staff issued Regulatory Issue Summary (RIS) 2006-04, “Experience with Implementation of Alternative Source Terms,” to provide holders of operating licenses for power reactors information on recent experiences with implementation of AST in design basis accident radiological analyses. Currently, more than 10 license amendment requests for full-scope implementation of AST are under staff review. Many of these submittals lack the necessary information for the staff to make its safety determination and have required multiple requests for additional information. The RIS discusses the more frequent and significant issues encountered by the staff in its review of submittals and provides information for licensees to consider when developing submittals. The staff expects that, by considering information contained in the RIS, the quality of submittals for implementation of AST will improve, which will result in improved efficiency of staff review.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Louisiana Energy Services Mandatory Hearing and Meeting with New Mexico State Agencies

On March 6, 2006, staff from the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), and NMSS participated in the mandatory hearing in Hobbs, NM, for the proposed Louisiana Energy Services (LES) uranium enrichment plant. Staff responded to Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) questions in the areas of: (a) regulatory guidance used in the licensing review; (b) decommissioning financial assurance; (c) nuclear criticality safety; (d) fire protection; (e) need for the facility; and (f) the environmental impacts of a uranium hexafluoride cylinder rupture. The ASLB also held limited appearance sessions on March 5 and 6, 2006. About 75 people made appearances, most of whom were in favor of the plant.

On March 9, 2006, staff from OGC and NMSS, Region IV, and the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response met with staff from the New Mexico Environment Department and the New Mexico Department of Public Safety, to discuss the status of the LES licensing, and plans to protect the shipment of classified components. The New Mexico State agencies committted to provide assistance, as needed, in the development of transportation security plans for the LES facility.

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Meetings

On March 6-10, 2006, at the request of the IAEA, NMSS staff participated in a consultant meeting at the IAEA headquarters, in Vienna, Austria, to revise a 1997 IAEA Provisional Safety Standard for volcanic hazards and the siting of nuclear facilities. This provisional guide required additional review and update for consideration as an IAEA Safety Standard. Staff helped to draft significant revisions to the provisional guide, so that it now better represents current knowledge on the assessment of potential volcanic hazards in an integrated regulatory framework.

On March 6-10, 2006, NMSS staff also participated, at IAEA's request, in a meeting at IAEA headquarters to review the IAEA draft Safety Guide for geological disposal of radioactive waste. NMSS staff provided input, from a regulatory perspective, based on staff experience with high-level waste regulations and performance assessment.

Meeting with Caterpillar Technology Center on Amorphous Metal Coatings

On March 9, 2006, NMSS staff visited Caterpillar's technology center in Peoria, IL, and its production facility in Joliet, IL, to discuss its research and development activities on corrosion-resistant amorphous metal coatings. The Department of Energy is investigating the possible use of these amorphous metal coatings for a revised engineered barrier system design at the potential Yucca Mountain repository.

Public Meeting on Nuclear Criticality Safety and Materials Issues

On March 14, 2006, NMSS staff met with Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) and industry representatives to discuss selected technical and licensing issues related to dry storage and transportation of spent fuel. The issues discussed were: (a) criticality safety during cask loading in spent fuel pools; (b) burnup credit; (c) burnup measurement; (d) criticality monitoring requirements; and (e) Interim Staff Guidance (ISG)-1 “Damaged Fuels,” and ISG-11 “Cladding Considerations for the Transportation and Storage of Spent Fuel.” NEI and industry acknowledged NRC’s rulemaking effort on 10 CFR 50.68 to address criticality safety requirements during cask loading. NEI requested a future meeting to discuss, in more detail, burnup credit, burnup measurement, and moderator exclusion.

Public Meeting on ISG-21 and -22

On March 14, 2006, NMSS staff met with NEI, industry, and other stakeholders on the technical bases for ISG-21 "Use of Computational Modeling Software,” and ISG-22 “Potential Fuel Rod Splitting Due to Exposure to an Oxidizing Atmosphere during Storage and Transportation.” Draft versions of both ISGs had been issued previously for public comment. Comments have been received and incorporated, and the final ISGs are scheduled for release soon.

Public Meeting on Amendment for Model No. NAC-LWT

On March 15, 2006, NMSS staff met with NAC International to discuss an amendment for the Model No. NAC-LWT package for transport of research reactor spent fuel. NAC International plans to submit an amendment request in April 2006, to change the authorized contents for this package.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Letter of Agreement Between the NRC and the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Relating to the International Fire Incident Records Exchange (FIRE) Project

On March 10, 2006, the EDO signed the subject Letter of Agreement relating to the International Fire Incident Records Exchange (FIRE) Project. The letter defines the terms and conditions by which the NRC and OECD/NEA will continue to cooperate in the exchange of international fire incident records data. Continued participation in OECD-FIRE will ensure NRC maintains access to proprietary foreign data that would not otherwise be available. These data augment the NRC's fire incident records exchange database with foreign experience and enable the staff to compare domestic fire incident experience with that of other countries and glean insights for use in quantitative risk studies. This Agreement became effective upon signature and will remain in effect through December 31, 2008.

5th International MELCOR Accident Consequence Code System Users Group (IMUG) Meeting

On March 10, 2006, staff participated in the subject meeting at NRC Headquarters. The IMUG is comprised of users of the NRC's off-site consequence code. Discussions focused on enhancements to the code and future plans.

Meeting with Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR) (Pty) Ltd.

On March 15 and 16, 2006, staff from RES, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, and the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response participated in the subject meeting to discuss plant operations, design approach, and response to events for the PBMR. These discussions are in support of future white papers that PBMR (Pty), Ltd. plans to submit to the NRC in May 2006 as part of the pre-design certification application review.

Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-III-06-005A, LaSalle Unit 1 - INDICATION FAILURE FOR THREE CONTROL RODS FOLLOWING REACTOR TRIP (UPDATE).

2. PNO-III-05-016D, Braidwood 1 and 2 - TRITIUM CONTAMINATION ISSUES (4TH UPDATE).

3. PNO-IV-06-001, Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station - FOLLOWUP FOR TRITIUM CONTAMINATION FOUND IN WATER ONSITE.

Office of Administration (ADM)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Licenses, Certifications, and Approvals for Nuclear Power Plants (AG24- Part 52, et al)

On March 13, 2006, the NRC published a proposed rule in the Federal Register (71 FR 12782) that would revise its regulations governing the licensing and approval processes for nuclear power plants contained in 10 CFR Part 52. The proposed revision is intended to enhance the NRC's regulatory effectiveness in implementing its licensing and approval process on the basis of lessons learned during design certification and early site permit reviews and on interactions with stakeholders concerning these processes. The proposed rule would also clarify the applicability of various regulatory requirements to each of the regulatory processes in Part 52. The comment period for this action closes May 30, 2006.

Construction Project

On March 15, 2006, the NRC and General Services Administration declared the Perimeter Security Project to be essentially complete. This project is the culmination of several physical protection projects implemented to protect the NRC campus, i.e., vehicle bollards, tensile fencing, boulders and new guard booths.

Office of Information Services (OIS)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act Requests Received During the Period of March 10 through March 16, 2006:

Palisades Plant, Task Interface Agreement relating to ISFSI, April 2005, FOIA/PA-2005-0259	FOIA/PA-2006-0136
OI Case 1-2003-045, correspondence from NRC to named individual, certified copy of official record	FOIA/PA-2006-0137
OI Report 3-2004-012, Exhibit 3, Transcript of interview with named investigator, April 13, 2004	FOIA/PA-2006-0138
Diablo Canyon plant, December 2003 Monthly Operating Report	FOIA/PA-2006-0139
Indian Point 2 Spent Fuel Pool, all correspondence between NRC & Entergy Northeast LLC, from 1-6-06 through 3-14-06	FOIA/PA-2006-0140
OI report on Progress Energy's Crystal River plant access incident in 2005; security inspection, Shearon Harris nuclear plant	FOIA/PA-2006-0141
St. Elizabeth Hospital, Youngstown, OH, radiation of new born thyroids, 1946-47, all records	FOIA/PA-2006-0142
Records of Thomas M. Roberts - Referral by Ronald Reagan Library	FOIA/PA-2006-0143

Office of Human Resources (HR)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Arrival		
BARTLINSKI, ANITA B.	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	HR
CLARK, JUDY	CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OIG
GROVER, RAVI	REACTOR ENGINEER	NRR
LEE, ERIKA	SECRETARY (OA)	NRR
ORENDI, MONICA L.	HEALTH PHYSICIST (NSPDP)	STP
SANDERS, CARLEEN	GENERAL ENGINEER (NSPDP)	NRR
SHARMA, BHAWANA	CONSULTANT	ADM
STANBACK, TASHA	SECRETARY (OA)	NRR
WILLIAMS, MICHELLE L.	HUMAN RESOURCES ASSISTANT	HR
Departures		
TAYLOR, JAMES R.	SENIOR CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OIG

Office of Public Affairs (OPA)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

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

The tritium leaks at several nuclear power plants.

NRC's special inspection of Indian Point's spent fuel pool.

The Design Basis Threat for nuclear plants.

The NRC's multimedia hearing rooms for the expected Yucca Mountain adjudication.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
06-034	NRC Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste to Meet in Rockville, Maryland, March 22-24 (3/14)
06-035	NRC Completes Minnesota Agreement to Regulate Use of Certain Radioactive Materials (3/17)
Regions:	
I-06-013	NRC to Discuss Violations Involving Marcus Hook, Pa., Company (3/13)
III-06-009	NRC to Discuss 2005 Performance Assessment and Review Safety Culture Survey for Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant (3/15)
III-06-010	NRC to Discuss 2005 Performance Assessment for Fermi Nuclear Power Plant (3/16)
III-06-011	NRC to Discuss 2005 Performance Assessment for Kewaunee Nuclear Power Plant (3/16)

Office of the Secretary (SECY)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SECY-06-0035	02/13/06	Process for Releasing Non-Impacted Areas of the Western New York Service Center Before the Completion of Site Decommissioning
SRM on SECY-06-0035	03/14/06	(same)
Voting Record on SECY-06-0035	03/14/06	(same)
2. COMGBJ-06-0002	03/8/06	Vermont Yankee's Extended Power Uprate License Amendment
3. COMGBJ-06-0001	03/02/06	Establishing a Policy for the Review of New Power Reactor Combined Operating Licenses
Information Papers		
SECY-06-0042	02/28/06	Annual Report on Commission Adjudication

Commission Correspondence

Letter to Congresswoman Sue W. Kelly, dated March 10, 2006, responds to request that an Independent Safety Assessment be conducted at the Indian Point site.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS), request for resumes.

2. ACRS, Subcommittee Meeting on Planning and Procedures, notice of meeting (4/5/06).

Region II (RII)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) Exit Meeting at the Turkey Point Nuclear Plant

On March 14, 2006, the Regional Administrator, accompanied by the Deputy Executive Director for Reactor and Preparedness Programs, attended the AIT Exit Meeting at the Turkey Point Nuclear Plant. The AIT was conducted to verify that the licensee's compensatory and corrective actions were appropriate to ensure the proper level of security in light of recent items identified at the plant.

Region III (RIII)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

Perry Public Meeting

On March 14, 2006, Region III staff met with representatives of FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company (FENOC) to discuss the results of NRC's annual assessment and the results of the Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL) followup inspections. There were two green findings (findings of very low safety significance) as a result of the supplemental inspection action item review resulting from human performance errors that occurred during NRC-observed testing activities. Approximately 70 individuals attended the meeting including plant employees, representatives of the State of Ohio Emergency Management Agency, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, and members of the public.

Quad-Cities Public Meeting Results

On March 16, 2006, Region III and the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation staff met with representatives of Exelon Generation Company to discuss inspection plans, modifications and startup test plans for the electromatic relief valves at Quad Cities Nuclear Power Plant during the March Unit 2 outage. The company presented the results of their root cause evaluation, extent of condition evaluation, and planned corrective actions to reduce or eliminate the main steam line vibrations. This meeting was attended by representatives from other utilities, contractors and the State of Illinois Emergency Management Agency.

Office of Congressional Affairs (OCA)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 10					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Combs	TBD	TBA	DOE	Status of Yucca Mountain license application	Senators Domenici/Bingaman Energy and Natural Resources
Keeling	03/14/06 2154 RHOB	2:00	TBD	Overclassification of Federal Documents	Reps. Shays/Kucinich National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations Government Reform
Decker	03/14/06 S-116 Capitol	2:15	Markup	Implementing legislation on the Treaty to implement the obligations of the U.S. under the protocol additional to the agreement between the U.S. and IAEA for the application of safeguards in the U.S.	Senators Lugar/Biden Foreign Relations
Combs	03/15/06 2362B RHOB	10:00	DOE - Paul Golin, Acting Director, OCRWM	Department of Energy - Nuclear Waste Disposal	Reps. Hobson/Visclosky Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Combs	03/15/06 SD-366	11:30	Nomination Vote	Mr. Dennis Spurgeon to be Assistant Secretary of Energy for Nuclear Energy	Senators Domenici/Bingaman Energy and Natural Resources
Combs	03/15/06 2123 RHOB	3:00	Clay Sell, DOE	Status of Yucca Mountain	Reps. Hall/Boucher Energy and Air Quality Energy and Commerce

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 10					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Shane	03/16/06 2154 RHOB	10:00	TBD, NRC is **not** testifying	FISMA	Reps. Davis/Waxman Government Reform
Combs	03/23/06 Las Vegas, NV **Postponed** May be held in April/May	TBD	NRC, GAO, DOE/OCRWM, DOE/IG, Bechtel	Yucca Mountain Project: Persistent Management and Quality Assurance	Reps. Porter/Davis Federal Workforce and Agency Organization Government Reform
Combs	03/28/06 TBD	TBD	NRC, GAO, DOE/NNSA, DHS/Customs and Border Protection	GAO findings with regard to counterfeiting an NRC license and general availability of exempt quantity radioactive sources	Senators Coleman/Levin Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Decker	03/30/06 SD-138	10:00	DOE	Yucca Mountain/EM/Office of Safeguards and Security	Senators Domenici/Reid Energy and Water Appropriations
Keeling	04/04/06 2247 RHOB	2:00	NRC, GAO, NEI, Exelon, Connecticut Attorney General, POGO	NRC efforts to define the DBT and set protective standards for the Nuclear Power Industry	Reps. Shays/Kucinich National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations Government Reform

Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS)/
Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW)
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 17, 2006

As a result of its 530th meeting (March 9-11, 2006), the ACRS issued letters and reports on the following subjects.	
Date	**Subject**
March 15, 2006	Review and Evaluation of the NRC Safety Research Program