

June 5, 2006

ORGANIZATION: Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI)

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF THE LICENSE RENEWAL MEETING BETWEEN THE
U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION STAFF AND THE
NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

On March 23, 2006, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff and representatives from the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) and industry met to discuss the generic license renewal topics, lessons learned from the audit process, and license renewal process improvements. A list of meeting attendees is provided in Enclosure 1 and the meeting agenda is provided in Enclosure 2. A summary of the discussions follows:

1. Environmental topics

a. Severe accident mitigation alternatives guidance

The NRC staff has completed its review of NEI guidance document, "Severe Accident Mitigation Alternatives (SAMA) Analyses, Guidance Document," NEI 05-01, Revision A. NEI submitted the document for review by letter dated February 17, 2006, (Accession No. ML060530192). The latest revision resolves previous staff comments and the staff plans to endorse the guidance in an Interim Staff Guidance (ISG) document in accordance with the established ISG process. Use of an ISG includes transmittal of the ISG to NEI, current applicants, and public interest groups for comment as well as publication in the *Federal Register* for public comment. The staff will incorporate the ISG into a future revision of environmental Regulatory Guide 4.2, Supplement 1. NEI is pleased with the staff's intended endorsement but stated that it still has concerns with the use of the ISG process. The staff believed that NEI's concerns with the process had been previously addressed. The staff and NEI will discuss use of the ISG process in a future meeting.

b. Acceptance review criteria

The NRC staff is documenting the checklist it uses to determine if the environmental portion of a license renewal application is acceptable for docketing and review. Following its established process, the staff will issue an ISG for NEI and public comment and will incorporate the final version of the checklist in a future revision of the environmental standard review plan.

c. Status of Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) update

Scoping activities for the update of the GEIS, NUREG-1437, began in 2003, and work was delayed due to higher priority work within the NRC. Work on the update has now restarted. The staff's goal is to issue a scoping summary report in the summer of 2006. Because the GEIS is codified in Title 10 of the Code of *Federal Regulations* Part 51

(10 CFR), any change to the GEIS will require rulemaking. The current schedule is to publish a draft rule change in late 2007, and finalize the change in late 2008. NEI asked whether the extensive comments provided in 2004, would be considered and whether the industry would have another opportunity to review and comment on the update. The staff responded that it was considering all comments received and would provide another opportunity for public comment with publication of the draft rule change.

2. New issues under development

This item is a standing agenda item for all license renewal meetings with NEI. No new issues were identified for discussion.

3. NEI draft guidance development

- a. Acceptance review
- b. Standard for content of onsite documentation

NEI indicated that its consolidating comments within the industry on both of these items and will provide the schedule for submittal in the future.

4. GALL Report aging management program XI.E6 for electrical cable connections

The NRC staff included in Revision 1 of the Generic Aging Lessons Learned (GALL) Report (NUREG-1801, September 2005), an aging management program XI.E6, "Electrical Cable Connections Not Subject to 10 CFR 50.49 Environmental Qualification Requirements." NEI does not believe there was adequate dialogue on this program when Revision 1 of the GALL Report was issued and that this program is not needed or supported by operating experience. However, the program represents the current staff position on aging management for the subject cable connections. Because the GALL Report is only a guidance document, applicants are free to propose alternate approaches in plant-specific applications. A separate meeting will be scheduled to discuss information NEI has developed regarding the need for this program.

5. Potential improvements in license renewal costs and schedule

Cost and schedule improvements for license renewal application reviews were previously discussed in the license renewal session of the 2006 Regulatory Information Conference (RIC). As discussed at the RIC, the first renewal applications to fully use the revised license renewal guidance documents issued in September 2005, are the January 2006 Pilgrim and Vermont applications. The revised guidance documents are expected to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the process by allowing more of the review to be performed by the NRC's audit team. The staff has also been working internally to improve the efficiency of its audit process incorporating lessons learned from past reviews. However, industry can also contribute to improving costs and schedules with high quality and complete submittals and providing the needed support for the review process. The staff and industry will revisit this topic in approximately ten months after the safety evaluation reports with open items are issued for Pilgrim and Vermont Yankee.

Future public meetings between the NRC staff and NEI were discussed. The next public telephone conference was subsequently scheduled and held on April 19, 2006. A separate April 26, 2006, meeting was also subsequently scheduled to discuss NEI's disagreement with the staff's position on implementing the provisions of 10 CFR 54.37(b) and the applicability of the backfit rule (10 CFR 50.109). See NEI letter to the NRC dated March 8, 2006 (ADAMS Accession No. ML060750262).

/RA/

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Project No. 690

Enclosures:

1. Meeting Attendees List
2. Meeting Agenda

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS FOR THE TELEPHONE CONFERENCE CALL
BETWEEN THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION STAFF
AND THE NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

MARCH 23, 2006

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MEETING BETWEEN
THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION STAFF
AND THE NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

MARCH 23, 2006

1. Environmental topics
 - a. Severe accident mitigation alternatives guidance
 - b. Acceptance review criteria
 - c. Status of Generic Environmental Impact Statement update
2. New issues under development
3. NEI draft guidance development
 - a. Acceptance review
 - b. Standard for content of onsite documentation
4. GALL Report aging management program XI.E6 for electrical cable connections
5. Potential improvements in license renewal costs and schedule
6. Public participation

NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

Project No. 690

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Note to Organization: Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) from Stephen T. Hoffman,
dated: June 5,2006

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