

June 29, 2006

ORGANIZATION: Nuclear Energy Institute

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF THE LICENSE RENEWAL TELEPHONE CONFERENCE  
CALL AND MEETING HELD BETWEEN THE U.S. NUCLEAR  
REGULATORY COMMISSION STAFF AND THE NUCLEAR ENERGY  
INSTITUTE LICENSE RENEWAL TASK FORCE

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff and the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) License Renewal Task Force held a public telephone conference call and meeting on May 31, 2006, to discuss generic license renewal topics, lessons learned from the audit process, and license renewal process improvements. Enclosure 1 provides a listing of the conference call participants. Enclosure 2 contains the agenda for the conference call. A summary of the discussions follows:

1. New issues under development

A. License Renewal Interim Staff Guidance (LR-ISG) on BWR Mark-1 Drywell Shells

The subject LR-ISG was published in the Federal Register for public comment on May 9, 2006 (71 FR 27010), and was sent by letter to NEI on May 3, 2006. NEI continues to believe that an LR-ISG is not needed, the issue is plant-specific, and it has been adequately addressed in the past. NEI had previously presented its position at a March 23, 2006, meeting with the staff. However, NEI will send comments on the LR-ISG regarding clarification and format. Subsequent to the meeting, NEI also provided its comments on this topic to the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards at its May 31, 2006, meeting.

B. LR-ISG regarding tritium in groundwater

With the recent detection of tritium in groundwater at a number of nuclear power plants, the staff informed NEI that future license renewal environmental audits will include review of onsite documentation for plant-specific experience. Groundwater quality is a Category I item in Appendix B, Table B-1 of 10 CFR Part 51, Subpart A. The staff's review of onsite documentation is to confirm that there is not any new and significant information that would preclude the staff from treating the issue as a Category I issue. Unless an applicant identifies new and significant information, specific information on tritium contamination is not needed in their application. The staff is revising its audit procedures and will determine if an LR-ISG is needed on this topic.

C. Revision of the LR-ISG process to explicitly include environmental guidance

The LR-ISG process provides a way to capture and communicate to stakeholders' lessons learned from license renewal reviews until the information can be incorporated into the next update of the guidance documents. However, the current LR-ISG process

lists only the safety review guidance documents. For consistency, the staff is updating the process to include reference to the environmental review guidance.

D. Status of severe accident mitigation alternatives and environmental acceptance review for LR-ISG

A proposed LR-ISG endorsing NEI's "Severe Accident Mitigation Alternatives (SAMA) Analysis Guidance Document," NEI 05-01, Rev. A (Accession No. ML060530192), has been prepared and is in the final concurrence to be issued for public comment. A second proposed LR-ISG containing the NRC staff's checklist for performing the acceptance review for the environmental portion of the application also is in the final concurrence.

A representative of the applicant for the Pilgrim and Vermont Yankee license renewal applications indicated that the SAMA analyses for these plants were prepared before the guidance was developed. However, the requests for additional information appear to be going beyond the scope of the guidance. The staff agreed to schedule a conference call with the applicant to discuss their concerns. Because of the interest in the use of the guidance expressed by other participants during the call, a meeting will be scheduled on this topic, possibly in combination with the next quarterly NEI – NRC license renewal meeting planned for June 2006.

2. Response to NEI letter re: 10 CFR 54.37(b)

The NRC staff is still evaluating the information provided at the April 26, 2006, meeting with NEI and will respond in the future.

3. Lessons learned from recent safety review audits

In April and May of 2006, the staff has conducted audits at Oyster Creek, Vermont Yankee, and Pilgrim. Staff observations from these audits are as follows:

- A. In order to clarify the purpose of the audit exit meeting, the staff will consider changing the name of the audit exit meeting. In addition, the staff will consider issuing a press release to ensure that the purpose of the meeting is appropriately reflected in the local media. The staff will continue to emphasize good communication with the applicant and the public and will ensure that all documentation is placed on the docket.
- B. Applicants' preparation for the on-site audit should be based on the latest experience from recent audits and not limited to the approach used for the piloting of the process at Farley, Arkansas Unit 2, and Cook.
- C. If a corporate headquarters team is used to prepare the application, make sure the site team is involved and knowledgeable of the application.
- D. If components associated with off-site power sources are in the scope of the license renewal, aging management programs are needed, even if the off-site power sources are owned and controlled by an entity other than the applicant.

E. Approximately one week before arriving on-site, the NRC audit team sent questions to the Oyster Creek applicant on issues for which it needed more information when the team was on-site. Although not required, the applicant had prepared written responses in the form of a question and answer data base that were available when the team arrived. The availability of responses at the onset of the audit greatly enhanced the efficiency of the process. However, based on feedback from the applicant, NEI requested that the audit team provide the questions at least two weeks in advance as it was a challenge for the applicant's team to prepare the responses the week before and then continue to provide support for the audit. The staff agreed to investigate the feasibility.

4. Update on guidance development for license renewal application acceptance review

NEI indicated that it was completing the guidance and would be submitting it to the NRC in the near future. The guidance is intended to open dialogue on the process with the staff and to enhance communication.

5. Public participation

No members of the public participated in the meeting.

**/RA/**

Stephen T. Hoffman, Senior Project Manager  
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Project No. 690

Enclosures:

1. List of Participants
2. Meeting Agenda

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**Adams Accession No.: ML061810283**

DOCUMENT NAME:E:\Filenet\ML061810283.wpd

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between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Staff  
and the Nuclear Energy Institute  
May 31, 2006

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Teleconference Agenda  
between the U.S. NRC Staff and the Nuclear Energy Institute  
Wednesday, May 31, 2006

TOPIC	LEAD
1. New issues under development	
A. Interim Staff Guidance (ISG) on BWR Mark-1 Drywell Shells	NRC
B. ISG regarding tritium in groundwater	
C. Revision of ISG process to explicitly include environmental guidance	
2. Response to NEI letter re. 10 CFR 54.37(b)	NRC
3. Lessons learned from recent safety review audits	NRC/NEI
4. Update on guidance development for LRA acceptance review	NEI
5. Public participation	All

## NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE

Project No. 690

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Note to Organization: Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) from Stephen T. Hoffman,  
dated: June 29,2006

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