

October 12, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: Luis A. Reyes  
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Brian W. Sheron, Director */RA/* James Wiggins for  
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF THE PROBABILISTIC RISK ASSESSMENT  
STEERING COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

The Probabilistic Risk Assessment Steering Committee (PRASC) held a public meeting on September 28, 2006, with representatives from the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) and the nuclear industry to discuss issues related to current risk-informed initiatives. The meeting agenda and NRC presentation slides are provided in Enclosure 1, and the list of attendees is provided in Enclosure 2. The meeting was noticed on September 14, 2006.

As a prelude to this meeting, the staff and representatives from the nuclear power industry met with the Commission on May 3, 2006, to discuss the status of risk-informed and performance-based reactor regulation. The Commission encouraged the staff to enhance interactions with stakeholders, and to ensure that processes are in place to resolve issues in a timely manner, including raising issues to senior management as appropriate. In correspondence between the NRC and NEI on May 15, 2006, and June 30, 2006, the NRC agreed to hold semi-annual stakeholder meetings with NRC senior management on risk-informed and performance-based regulation.

The PRASC welcomed the attendees and discussed its charter, membership, and structure. In particular, the PRASC discussed its role in providing strategic direction to the staff on the use of PRA technology and risk-information, and resolving policy issues associated with risk-informed regulation. The PRASC discussed the appropriate levels of interface that should exist between the industry and NRC. With regard to risk-informed regulation implementation issues, the PRASC indicated that stakeholders should first address issues and concerns with NRC working level staff and first line supervision. Issues or concerns that were not amenable to resolution at that level could be brought to the NRC's recently formed PRA Leadership Team. The PRA Leadership Team consists of the NRC division directors from the various program offices, who are also responsible for development and implementation of risk-informed initiatives.

The staff discussed planned improvements to the risk-informed regulation implementation plan (RIRIP) in response to the Commission's June 1, 2006, Staff Requirements Memorandum. The proposed improvements included a better framework for planning RIRIP activities, and

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assessing their effectiveness. The planning framework would establish a clear vision and specific goals for where the agency should be in risk-informing activities. The effectiveness review would focus on identifying lessons-learned and best practices that should be considered in future efforts, and determining whether the desired outcomes from various completed RIRIP activities were achieved. The staff solicited industry feedback on risk-informed priorities so that this information would be included in the planning framework.

The staff also discussed ongoing efforts to improve the NRC's risk-informed environment, with an emphasis on broadening the staff's knowledge of, and acceptance of the use of risk information in daily activities. The efforts included plans to develop risk-informed regulation elements in qualification plans, formal and informal training, and a web-based community of practice forum for risk-related information. The staff solicited feedback from industry on whether the industry had initiated similar efforts.

NEI and industry representatives discussed their views on the forthcoming revision to Regulatory Guide 1.200, "An Approach for Determining the Technical Adequacy of Probabilistic Risk Assessment Results for Risk-Informed Activities." Although they were supportive of the changes to the Regulatory Guide, there was considerable discussion regarding the appropriate implementation period for license applications and amendments submitted to the NRC which would have to meet the revised Regulatory Guide. NEI proposed that the application period should be one year after the issuance of Revision 1 to Regulatory Guide 1.200. NEI also proposed that the staff should make greater use of licensee PRAs that meet the guidance in Regulatory Guide 1.200. For example, NEI inquired as to whether a licensee's "qualified" PRA could be used in place of the NRC's SPAR models for determining the risk significance of findings from the Reactor Oversight Process. The staff indicated that a working group would be formed to interact with industry on Regulatory Guide 1.200 implementation issues and the potential to use licensee PRAs for other purposes.

NEI and industry representatives stated that their current focus and resources were predominately devoted to the fire PRA and full power PRA development to meet the criteria of Regulatory Guide 1.200, Revision 1. With regard to the external events and low power and shutdown operations PRA standards development, NEI and industry representatives indicated that these standards were of a lower priority to them, and suggested that NRC resources should be focused on the fire and full power operations PRAs. The staff and industry discussed a recent motion by the ANS and ASME to develop an integrated PRA quality standard that would cover all modes and all initiators. NEI and industry representatives expressed concern regarding the potential that an integrated standard would delay finalization and endorsement of the fire PRA quality standard currently being developed by the ANS. The staff indicated that the plan and the schedule for development and endorsement of the PRA quality standards would be revised to reflect the recent decisions by ANS and ASME.

The staff and industry briefly discussed Technical Specifications Initiatives 4B and 5B, and the 50.46a rulemaking, and affirmed understanding of the schedules.

With regard to the State-of-the-Art Reactor Consequence Analysis project, the staff stated that realistic modelling of accident progression, system response, radionuclide deposition, and release pathways would be used for each plant. The NRC selected 6 pilot plants to participate in the first phase of the study. The NRC briefly discussed the selection and notification process for the pilot plants.

Enclosures:

1. Meeting Agenda and NRC Presentation Slides
2. Attendee List

cc: w/enclosures.:

M. Virgilio, OEDO	W. Kane, OEDO
J. Strosnider, NMSS	J. Dyer, NRR
C. Carpenter, OE	J. Gray, OGC
R. Zimmerman, NSIR	G. Grant, RIII
W. Borchardt, NRO	C. Miller, FSME
C. Holden, NRR	F. Eltawila, RES
E. Hackett, NMSS	M. Leach, NSIR
C. Ader, NRO	J. Wiggins, RES

L. Reyes

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