

April 18, 2007

MEMORANDUM TO: Commissioner McGaffigan  
Commissioner Jaczko  
Commissioner Lyons

FROM: Chairman Klein /RA/  
Commissioner Merrifield /RA/

SUBJECT: REPORT OF THE COMBINED LICENSE REVIEW  
TASK FORCE

After discussions during the fall of 2006 regarding enhancement of the NRC's environmental, technical, and adjudicatory reviews of new reactor applications, we agreed that Commissioner Merrifield would lead a task force to explore further efficiencies in the new reactor license review process while maintaining a paramount focus on safety. The NRC staff currently estimates it will take approximately 42 months to complete the review of a combined license application that references a certified design. This schedule includes 30 months for technical and environmental reviews that result in the issuance of a final safety evaluation report and a final environmental impact statement. In addition, the schedule includes 12 months for adjudicatory proceedings following completion of the technical and environmental reviews.

The task force has completed its review effort and has provided the attached report containing its findings and recommendations. We urge the Commission to direct the staff to expeditiously implement Recommendations 1 through 6, as described in the Executive Summary, in order to realize the identified schedule efficiencies for combined license application reviews expected to begin in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of calendar year 2007. In addition, we recommend that the Commission direct the staff to facilitate implementation of additional Recommendations 1 and 2 for further efficiencies in the review of license applications submitted after the initial wave of applications expected in late 2007 and early 2008. Finally, we recommend the Commission direct the staff to investigate the areas needing further consideration, as discussed in Enclosure 4, and report back to the Commission on their investigation results and plans for implementation.

We urge our fellow Commissioners to act expeditiously on these recommendations such that their implementation can effect further efficiencies in the staff's combined license review process.

We will work with Loren Plisco, the Executive Director of the Task Force, to schedule a briefing for the Commissioners Technical Assistants on the review efforts, findings, and recommendations included in the report.

SECY, please track.

cc: L. Reyes, EDO  
K. Cyr, OGC  
A. Vietti-Cook, SECY