

May 16, 2007

MEMORANDUM TO: Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Annette L. Vietti-Cook, Secretary **/RA/**

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - SECY-07-0047 - STAFF APPROACH TO VERIFYING THE CLOSURE OF INSPECTIONS, TESTS, ANALYSES, AND ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA THROUGH A SAMPLE-BASED INSPECTION PROGRAM

The Commission has approved the staff's plans to develop an approach for selecting inspections, tests, analyses, and acceptance criteria (ITAAC) to be given priority for inspection subject to the following guidance.

The NRC's finite inspection resources should be carefully and systematically targeted for maximum value. Therefore, the staff should continue to refine its inspection resource estimates, including ITAAC and non-ITAAC inspections, assessments and reviews, and provide that information to the Commission in the normal budget process and new reactors status briefings.

The staff and the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) should discuss whether it would be feasible for the Committee to review the sampling methodology and statistical thresholds and, if so, the scope and timing of the review. An ACRS review should not divert the Committee from performing high priority reviews of safety issues pertaining to existing and future nuclear power plants.

The staff should continue to engage industry and interest group stakeholders to obtain their views on the construction inspection program using a public meeting approach similar to what was done during the development of the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP). The staff's engagement with external stakeholders should consider the issues raised in all the Commission's votes on this paper. In addition to engaging industry and interest group stakeholders, at an appropriate time near the start of construction activities the staff should reach out to stakeholders in the communities surrounding new construction sites and describe the construction inspection program in understandable terms and explain the mechanisms by which results will be publicly accessible.

The NRC's ITAAC review and inspection process should aim to provide confidence that the licensee's ITAAC completion and verification processes are effective, and thereby give reasonable assurance that the licensee's ITAAC completion notifications to the NRC are sufficient and accurate. The baseline ITAAC inspection program's level of effort should be planned to meet this standard. The program should be structured to allow for flexible scheduling to permit expansions in inspection scope when necessary to determine extent of condition should deficiencies be identified. Finally, the NRC ITAAC inspection effort should

include ITAAC across the full range of significance with effort being weighted toward those with higher significance.

In order to provide the staff with the authority and flexibility to incorporate improvements as experience is gained and to address unanticipated situations, the staff is not required to seek Commission approval of the inspection methodology. The staff should provide the Commission with an annual self-assessment report of the implementation of the construction inspection program.

cc: Chairman Klein
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
Commissioner Jaczko
Commissioner Lyons
OGC
CFO
OCA
OPA
Office Directors, Regions, ACRS, ACNW, ASLBP (via E-Mail)
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