

February 21, 2008

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Klein
Commissioner Jaczko
Commissioner Lyons

FROM: Luis A. Reyes */RA/*
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: KEEPING THE COMMISSION INFORMED OF THE STATUS OF
NEW REACTOR LICENSING ACTIVITIES

The purpose of this memo is to inform the Commission of an improved approach for keeping the Commission and stakeholders informed of the status of new reactor licensing activities which will provide information on a more frequent and timely basis. To accomplish this, staff will provide you the status of new reactor licensing activities using a Web-based method in lieu of a semiannual paper. This paper, first issued as SECY-01-0188, "Future Licensing and Inspection Readiness Assessment," dated October 12, 2001, and most recently as SECY-07-0152, "Semiannual Update of the Status of New Reactor Licensing Activities and Future Planning for New Reactors," dated August 31, 2007, was appropriate given the state of the new reactors program at that time.

Now that the Office of New Reactors (NRO) has been in operation for over a year and is fully involved in licensing reviews, such infrequent updating is insufficient to keep pace with new reactor activities. If the staff were to continue to provide semiannual updates, the information would be significantly outdated by the time it reached the Commission and stakeholders. Therefore, the staff has implemented a Web-based approach to inform the Commission and the stakeholders of the status of new reactor licensing activities. The staff believes that this approach will provide significant improvement in terms of more timely and easily accessible information to the Commission.

Under this new approach, the staff will post information regarding new reactor licensing activities to the internal NRO Web page through project status reports and Hot Topics. Additionally, on the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) public Web site, the staff will continue to post updated information and schedules of each of the ongoing new reactor projects as well as status reports of new reactor licensing activities (current and anticipated) for the next 4 years. These tools are discussed in detail below. In addition to the individual internal and external links that are provided below, the tools addressed above are conveniently co-located on a single webpage at <http://nrr10.nrc.gov/NRO/new-rx-status/index.cfm>.

The staff has developed project status reports to internally communicate to management schedule, resource, and project risk information for new reactor projects. To date, the staff has developed project status reports for the Economic Simplified Boiling Water Reactor

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Design Certification (DC), Advanced Plant 1000 Amended DC, Vogtle Early Site Permit, and Calvert Cliffs, South Texas Project, Bellefonte, and North Anna COLs. These project status reports are available on the internal NRO Web page at <http://nrr10.nrc.gov/NRO/new-rx-status/status-reports/2008/index.cfm>. The staff will develop additional project status reports as combined operating license (COL) and DC application reviews are accepted for review and for any new applications (including advanced reactor applications) that have yet to be submitted. It should be noted that the staff will send all internal project status reports to the Office of the General Counsel for review prior to posting them to the internal Web site to ensure compliance with 10 CFR 2.348. The staff will update the project status reports no less frequently than on a monthly basis. The staff has provided one-click print capability for multiple reports for those that prefer hard copies. The staff will continue to submit Executive Director for Operations Daily Notes to communicate major status changes.

The staff communicates significant technical and policy issues that are identified at internal and external meetings as highlights in the Hot Topics, which are published on a weekly basis on the internal NRO Web page at <http://nrr10.nrc.gov/DEVELOPMENT/DNRL/hot-topics.pdf>. The Hot Topics include highlights of published documents such as rulemakings; and include a schedule for upcoming significant internal and external meetings, public outreach meetings, audits, inspections, etc. Also provided in the Hot Topics is a status of the reviews of various new reactor projects as well as expected submittals with a link to the applicant's letters of intent. Finally, the Hot Topics provide an updated status of new reactor infrastructure activities (e.g., standard review plans and regulatory guides).

The NRC public Web site includes updated information and status of schedules for each of the new reactor projects currently under review and informs the public and staff when significant milestones associated with reviews of Early Site Permits (ESPs), DCs, and COL applications are completed. An example of this information is provided for each of the COL applications currently under review at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/col.html>. The external Web page also includes current information on the construction and vendor inspection program, guidance documents, rulemaking, and public meeting summaries under the New Reactor Licensing link on the NRC external home page.

The staff provides a report of new reactor licensing activities for the next 4 years on the NRC public Web site. This illustrates the staff's 4-year approach regarding ongoing and anticipated reviews of new reactor licensing activities. The current report (which was updated in January 2008) is available at <http://nrr10.nrc.gov/NRO/new-rx-status/docs/dnrl-new-rx-res-act-for-fy-08-to-11.pdf> and will be updated on a monthly basis.

The Web-based method will provide significant improvements in timeliness and ease of accessible information to the Commission and other stakeholders. As this progresses, I look forward to incorporating your feedback on this method. The staff is available to provide a demonstration of the information available on the Web site upon request. Please contact me if you have comments on this change.

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