

February 11, 2008

ALL AGREEMENT STATES, PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, AND VIRGINIA

**AVAILABILITY OF THE INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL REVIEW PANEL'S DRAFT REPORT
AND OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT (FSME-08-017)**

Purpose: To provide notification that the Independent External Review Panel to Identify Vulnerabilities in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Materials Licensing Program has issued its draft report and is seeking comment on its draft report.

Contents: - Draft Report of the Independent External Review Panel

Background: As part of the NRC's response to the U.S. Government Accountability Office's "sting" operation in 2007, the NRC chartered a new short-term advisory committee to identify vulnerabilities in the NRC's radioactive materials licensing program on October 2, 2007. The advisory committee, named the Independent External Review Panel (the Panel), was tasked with performing a comprehensive evaluation of the NRC's materials licensing program. The Panel's membership includes a former Agreement State program director, the current chair of the NRC's Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste and Materials, and a representative from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

Over the past 4 months, the Panel has received briefings on a number of subject areas, including: specific licensing, general licensing, import/export licensing, the pre-licensing guidance, Web-based Licensing, the National Source Tracking System, the Increased Controls, and the "good faith" presumption. The Panel has been briefed by individuals from the NRC's Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs, the NRC's Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, several NRC Regional Offices, the State of Florida, and the American College of Radiology.

Discussion: On February 8, the Panel issued its draft report, detailing its interim observations and findings, to the NRC's Executive Director for Operations. A copy of the Panel's draft report is enclosed for your review. The Panel welcomes comments on its draft report. The Panel will accept written or oral comments. Written comments should be directed to the point of contact listed below by March 5, 2008. Oral comments will be welcomed at the Panel's remaining public meetings, scheduled for February 19-21 and March 5-7 at the NRC's Headquarters in Rockville, MD. Individuals wishing to participate remotely should call or e-mail the point of contact listed below to make arrangements.

NRC Point of Contact: If you have any questions on this correspondence, please contact me at 301-415-8722 or the individual named below.

POINT OF CONTACT: Aaron T. McCraw
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Terrence Reis, Deputy Director
Division of Materials Safety
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Office of Federal and State Materials
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Enclosure:
As stated

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