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No. 07-043 **April 4, 2007**

NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING IN AIKEN, S.C., ON LICENSE REVIEW PROCESS FOR MOX FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will hold a public meeting April 12 in Aiken, S.C., to discuss its review of an application by Shaw Areva MOX Services to operate a mixed-oxide (MOX) fuel fabrication facility at the Savannah River Site.

The meeting will be held at the Aiken City Municipal Building, 214 Park Avenue SW, in Aiken, from 7:30 - 9:30 pm. NRC staff members will be available an hour before the meeting for informal discussions with members of the public.

During the formal meeting, the staff will discuss its review process for the operating license application, plans for inspecting the facility and enforcing NRC regulations, and the legal process for members of the public to request a hearing on the application before a panel of Atomic Safety and Licensing Board judges. Members of the public will have the opportunity to ask questions of the technical staff.

The MOX facility, which will be owned by the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration, is part of a bilateral effort between the United States and the Russian Federation to convert supplies of surplus weapons-grade plutonium into more proliferation-resistant forms by blending it with uranium. Converting the plutonium into this mixed-oxide fuel will enable it to be used in commercial reactors to generate electricity. In the United States, only those reactors authorized by the NRC will be permitted to use MOX fuel.

The NRC issued a construction authorization for the facility March 30, 2005. During that licensing review, the NRC staff completed an Environmental Impact Statement on the construction and operation of the proposed facility. That report is available on the NRC Web site at http://www.nrc.gov/materials/fuel-cycle-fac/mox/licensing.html. Information on various public meetings held regarding the MOX facility is also available there.

A notice of opportunity to request a hearing was published March 15 in the *Federal Register*. The deadline for requesting a hearing is May 14. Petitions may be filed by anyone whose interest may be affected by the facility and who wishes to participate as a party in the proceeding.

A request for hearing and a petition for leave to intervene must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff. Requests may also be submitted by facsimile to (301) 415-1101 or e-mail to HEARINGDOCKET@nrc.gov. A copy should also be submitted to the NRC Office of General Counsel, by facsimile to (301) 415-3725 or e-mail to OGCMailCenter@nrc.gov.

Information on the NRC's hearings process is available at this Web address: http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/regulatory/adjudicatory/hearing.html.

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