U.S.NRC
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Protecting People and the Environment

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Review of the DOE Regulatory Processes for the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant: NRC's Review Process

Bret Leslie, Senior Project Manager
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Public Meeting
Richland Washington August 28, 2008

Enclosure 2

Outline

- Who is the NRC?
- What was the NRC tasked to do?
- How did NRC conduct its review?
- Summary

Who is the NRC?

- Independent regulatory agency
- Separate from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)
- NRC licenses and regulates civilian use of radioactive material
  - To ensure adequate protection of public health and safety
  - To promote common defense and security
  - To protect the environment
- NRC does not have statutory authority to license or otherwise regulate DOE's activities at the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant (WTP)

What was the NRC tasked to do?

- NRC was tasked to conduct a review
  - The Report for the Omnibus Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2008 states:
    - "In cooperation with the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is directed to review the regulatory processes of the Department for the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant and report its assessment and recommendations to the Secretary of Energy and the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 180 days of enactment."

How did NRC conduct its review?

- Scope of the review
  - Areas addressed and limitations
  - Basis for assessment
- Schedule
  - Timeline of review process
- Interactions with organizations

What was the scope of NRC's review?

- Evaluation of DOE regulations, requirements, orders and guidance
  - Relative to NRC's regulatory framework
- Review was limited
  - Focused on safety and environmental programs and activities
  - Addressed human capital, DOE's approach to problem solving, and DOE's plan for transitioning from construction to operation

What was the scope of NRC's review? (continued)

- Review was not
  - A detailed design or license review
  - A detailed audit of implementation of DOE's requirements
  - An assessment of security or vulnerability
  - An assessment of whether DOE had resolved issues previously identified by NRC's 2001 report

What was the scope of NRC's review? (continued)

- NRC did not review
  - Security
  - Material control and accounting
  - Emergency planning
  - Management of plant output
  - Decommissioning

What was the scope of NRC's review? (continued)

- Basis for the assessment
  - WTP site visits observations
  - Interviews with WTP personnel and other relevant organizations (e.g., Washington State)
  - Review of DOE and contractor documents
- NRC's review team
  - Experienced inspectors
  - Broad spectrum of relevant technical staff

Timeline of review process

- Late December 2007
  - Omnibus Appropriation Bill enacted
- February 2008
  - WTP site visits and NRC public meeting
- May 2008
  - Public meeting on DOE's comments on draft report
  - Receipt of letter from House Appropriations Subcommittee
- August 2008
  - NRC's report provided to Congress and Secretary of Energy

Interactions with organizations

- Who?
  - DOE, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB), Government Accountability Office, and State of Washington
- What were the interactions?
  - Interviews
  - Review of portions of the draft report by DOE, DNFSB and State of Washington
- Why?
  - To understand the relationship of the organizations to DOE WTP
  - To ensure factual accuracy of the report

U.S.NRC
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
Protecting People and the Environment

Summary

- NRC is independent regulator
- Required by Congress to complete a review of DOE's regulatory processes at the Hanford Waste Treatment Plant
- NRC conducted its independent review
- NRC is informing stakeholders of its review process and its report