

Development of a Policy Statement on Safety Culture

June Cai

Office of Enforcement
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
MS O4 A15A
Washington, DC 20555
june.cai@nrc.gov

INTRODUCTION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) recognizes the importance of licensees establishing and maintaining a strong safety culture — a work environment where management and employees are dedicated to putting safety first. The Commission addressed safety culture in a Policy Statement in 1989 [1], where expectations for such a safety culture and how it supports the agency's mission to protect public health and safety were described. Although this policy statement was issued to make clear the Commission's expectation for utility management and licensed operators with respect to the conduct of nuclear power plant operations, the Commission intended for this policy statement to help foster the development and maintenance of a safety culture at every facility licensed by the NRC.

More recently, the Commission directed the NRC staff [2] to provide a draft policy statement on safety culture that explains the Commission's expectations for safety and security culture at all NRC licensees. Specifically, the purpose of this tasking was "to expand the Commission's policy of safety culture to address the unique aspects of security and to ensure the resulting policy is applicable to all licensees and certificate holders."

The Commission directed the staff to complete its evaluation, provide a recommendation to the Commission on how best to update the Commission policy, and provide the draft policy statement(s) for its consideration. The staff's review should include, at a minimum, evaluation of the following key areas:

- 1) Whether safety culture as applied to reactors needs to be strengthened.
- 2) How to increase attention to safety culture in the materials area.

- 3) How stakeholder involvement can most effectively be used to address safety culture for all NRC and Agreement State licensees and certificate holders, including any unique aspects of security.

- 4) Whether publishing NRC's expectations for safety culture and for security culture is best accomplished in one safety/security culture statement or in two separate statements, one each for safety and security, while still considering the safety and security interfaces.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTUAL WORK

A Safety Culture Policy Statement Task Group and Steering Committee were established to address this direction from the Commission. Guided by the Steering Committee, the Task Force conducted review and analysis of various information and data sources in order to inform and provide the basis for the draft policy statement and development of responses to the Commission direction. Examples of these sources were information from existing agency activities in the safety culture area and information and insights from relevant industry activities, international activities and organizations, and the organizational research literature.

In addition, the Task Force conducted outreach activities with stakeholders to raise awareness of safety culture, to provide information about this activity, and to gather input. The Task Force held a public meeting on February 3, 2009, to provide opportunity for stakeholders to offer input on the policy statement development and on the key topics related to the Commission direction. Task Force members also engaged with various stakeholder

groups through existing meetings and communication venues. The input gathered from stakeholders was evaluated in the development of the draft policy statement and the formulation of results and recommendations.

RESULTS

Based on the information reviewed and analyzed and the input received from stakeholder interactions, the staff developed a draft policy statement and results and recommendations to address the specific direction from the Commission for their review and consideration. The staff's due date for the draft policy statement and associated Commission paper discussing the results of the evaluation was April 30, 2009. This presentation at the June 2009 American Nuclear Society meeting will provide an overview of the staff's work on this activity, including the development process, the draft policy statement, and responses to the specific Commission direction items.

REFERENCES

[1] Nuclear Regulatory Commission, "Policy Statement on the Conduct of Nuclear Power Plant Operations," Federal Register Notice 54 FR 3424 (1989).

[2] Annette L. Vietti-Cook, Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM)-COMGBJ-08-0001, "A Commission Policy Statement on Safety Culture," (2008).