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License Renewal Applications for
Research and Test Reactors

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1 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

2 NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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4 STREAMLINING THE REVIEW PROCESS FOR LICENSE RENEWAL

5 APPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND TEST REACTORS

6 + + + + +

7 WORKSHOP

8 + + + + +

9 THURSDAY,

10 JUNE 4, 2009

11 + + + + +

12 ROCKVILLE, MD

13 + + + + +

14 The Workshop convened in Salon I of the
15 Rose Hill Ballroom, Legacy Hotel, 1775 Rockville Pike,
16 Rockville, Maryland, at 1:00 p.m., Al Adams,
17 Facilitator, presiding.

18 PRESENT:

19 AL ADAMS, Facilitator

20 DUANE HARDESTY, NRC

21 KATHRYN BROCK, NRC

22 LIHN TRAN, NRC

23 BILL WATKINS, Washington Safety Management Solutions

24 MIKE NORRIS, NRC

25 PRESENT (Continued):

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1 JERUD HANSON, Nuclear Energy Institute
2 ED ABBOTT, ABZ
3 ROB SWEENEY, Consultant
4 MARK BEAUMONT, URS Corporation
5 SUSAN UTTAL, NRC
6 RALPH BUTLER, University of Missouri
7 STEPHEN FRANTZ, Reed College
8 TOM BLOUNT, NRC
9 STEVE REESE, Oregon State University
10 SEAN O'KELLY, University of Texas (present via
11 telephone)
12 STEVE MILLER, Armed Forces Radiobiology Research
13 Institute
14 TOM MYERS, NIST
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(1:01 p.m.)

1
2
3 MR. ADAMS: Good afternoon. Thanks for
4 coming. This is my first Webinar. So I'm very
5 excited.

6 Today we're having what the NRC calls a
7 Category III public meeting, and we're going to be
8 discussing where we're at on these streamline review
9 process for research reactor license renewals, and
10 this is a Category III public meeting, which means not
11 only are industry representatives, licensees, vendor
12 organizations, non-governmental organizations, private
13 citizens, everybody is invited to attend the meeting
14 and participate. This is a meeting where I hope the
15 have a dialogue with the folks that are here in the
16 room and have dialed in versus just you listening to
17 me.

18 Our meeting today is being transcribed,
19 and the minutes of the meeting will become part of the
20 public record. So you'll be able to see in print what
21 has gone on.

22 If you're in the room here, could you
23 please make sure you've signed the attendance sheet in
24 the back? The Webinar participants, what we're hoping
25 is once we get that back up and running, the fact that

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1 you're logging in will identify you. If we're still
2 fighting with that later on near the end of the
3 discussion, we'll ask to have the folks on the phone
4 identify themselves and we'll log you down manually.

5 Because this is being transcribed,
6 especially to folks on the phone, if you ask questions
7 or make comments, please identify yourself and your
8 organization each and every time because we're not
9 that good at identifying voices. Also in the room, if
10 you can identify yourself, that will help, too.

11 This public meeting is part of our
12 outreach activities on license renewal to get public
13 comment. We will also be having a formal Federal
14 Register notice go out very shortly that will open up
15 a formal comment period. So not only will we look at
16 the comments that are made from today's meeting, but
17 we also invite formal comments to be submitted as a
18 result of the notice that will appear in the Federal
19 Register.

20 Have I missed anything, Duane?

21 MR. HARDESTY: If someone references
22 material that's not part of the slides, please
23 everyone what it is so they can understand, especially
24 for those that are on the phone.

25 MR. ADAMS: Okay. Did everybody hear

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1 that?

2 MR. HARDESTY: They should be able to view
3 the slides now.

4 MR. ADAMS: Okay. The people on the
5 Webinar, can you see the slides?

6 MR. WATKINS: This is Bill Watkins.
7 I can see them.

8 MR. ADAMS: Okay. Are the slides
9 changing?

10 MR. WATKINS: Yes, they are changing.

11 MR. ADAMS: Okay, all right. Then we're
12 in sync here.

13 We'll start with the introductions.
14 Public meeting information we've already gone through.
15 Introductions and welcome, we can just go around the
16 table quickly and on the phone so that we know who's
17 here.

18 My name is Al Adams. I'm a project
19 manager in the Research and Test Reactor Branch.

20 MR. HARDESTY: I am Duane Hardesty, also a
21 project manager in the Research and Test Reactor
22 Branch.

23 MS. BROCK: I'm Kathryn Brock. I'm a
24 Branch Chief with Research and Test Reactors at NRC.

25 MR. JENKINS: Jere Jenkins, Purdue

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1 University and TRTR.

2 MR. REESE: Steve Reese, Oregon State
3 University and TRTR.

4 MR. NORRIS: Mike Norris. I'm in the
5 Office of Nuclear Security, Incidence Response,
6 Emergency Preparedness.

7 MR. HANSON: Jerud Hanson, senior project
8 manager in Nuclear Energy Institute.

9 MR. ABBOTT: Ed Abbott, ABZ.

10 MR. SWEENEY: Rob Sweeney, consultant.

11 MR. BEAUMONT: Mark Beaumont, URS
12 Corporation.

13 MS. UTTAL: Susan Uttal, Office of the
14 General Counsel, NRC.

15 MR. BUTLER: Ralph Butler, University of
16 Missouri, Chair, TRTR.

17 MR. BLOUNT: Tom Blount, Deputy Director,
18 Division of Policy and Rulemaking, NRC.

19 MR. WEISS: Sy Weiss, TRTR.

20 MR. ADAMS: Jeremy.

21 MR. SILVER: Jeremy Silver with --.

22 MS. REED: Beth Reed, project manager,
23 NRC.

24 MR. BEAUMONT: Mark Beaumont, NRC.

25 MR. WURTZ: Geoff Wurtz, project manager,

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1 NRC.

2 MS. TRAN: Lihn Tran, project manager,
3 NRC.

4 MS. MONTGOMERY: Cindy Montgomery, project
5 manager, NRC.

6 MR. KENNEDY: (Unintelligible) Kennedy,
7 project manager, NRC.

8 MR. HARRIS: Steve Harris, project
9 manager, NRC.

10 MR. ADAMS: Also if they want to say
11 something for the record, they need to come up to the
12 mic.

13 MR. HARDESTY: And also, I would ask
14 everyone, pretty much Jere on down and Hal on down,
15 please speak up because the audience can only hear
16 through that one speaker phone.

17 MR. HANSON: There are additional
18 microphones on the table.

19 MR. BLOUNT: But they don't necessarily go
20 into the phone.

21 MR. HANSON: Oh.

22 MS. BROCK: And who do we have on the
23 phone, please?

24 MR. FRANTZ: Stephen Frantz from Reed
25 College.

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1 MS. BROCK: Bill, are you still there,
2 Watkins?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. ADAMS: Les, are you there? Peter?
5 Stephen, are you still there?

6 MR. FRANTZ: Stephen is here.

7 MR. ADAMS: Well, again, at the end of our
8 discussion we'll make sure we catch everybody.

9 For opening thoughts I'd like to turn to
10 Tom and Kathryn for any thoughts they have at the
11 beginning here. Tom

12 MR. BLOUNT: I'd like to say thank you to
13 everyone that's participating today.

14 A research and test reactor streamlining
15 activity has become very visible in our organization.

16 It's one of the key issues that we need to deal with.

17 We recognize that. We've got a significant backlog
18 that we need to address, and that's part of what this
19 effort is about.

20 But even beyond just dealing with the
21 immediate future and the existing backlog, we want to
22 insure that going forward we've got a defined process
23 that's going to allow us to be more effective and
24 efficient, and so that's a large part of what we hope
25 to gain out of this effort.

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1 First of all, we want to deal with the
2 existing backlog, but then beyond that, we want to
3 have a process that is sufficient and accurate to deal
4 with any future licensing efforts in this area.

5 So we certainly appreciate your engagement
6 and look forward to a very productive effort as we
7 move forward.

8 MS. BROCK: And I want to say thanks for
9 indulging us again. This is our third meeting on this
10 subject. So you'll see we've inched along in a
11 meeting in September 2008 and again in March, and at
12 this meeting we finally have a product available in
13 our draft interim staff guidance to really dig into
14 and talk about. So any comments you have, we need
15 them. We need your input.

16 So thank you.

17 MR. ADAMS: Thank you, Tom; thank you,
18 Kathy.

19 As I stated, the purpose of getting
20 together today is to discuss with various stakeholders
21 the draft interim staff guidance for research reactor
22 license renewal. A couple of things I want to
23 emphasize here.

24 First is the word "draft." This is a work
25 in progress. That's why we're reaching out to the

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1 various parties involved to get ideas and get feedback
2 to make sure that we're heading in the right
3 direction. So this is not a final document yet. This
4 is not the definitive answer, but this is what we're
5 putting on the table as the way we want to move
6 forward for dealing with the research reactor renewals
7 that are in house at the moment.

8 What we'll talk today a little bit about
9 is background, and if you've been to the other
10 meetings, you've heard some of this before, but for
11 the folks that this is the first time they've been
12 involved, this will be a little bit of background
13 information that's new.

14 The details of the ISG, the interim staff
15 guidance, is the philosophy that we use to arrive at
16 how we believe we're meeting the guidance from the
17 Commission and where we want to go on this, and I'll
18 talk a little bit about the focused review for license
19 renewal that's part of the ISG, and that's a document
20 which tells the NRC reviewers how to take our standard
21 review plan and use it for a focused license renewal.

22 Any questions? Any comments at this
23 point?

24 MR. WEISS: Do you want questions at the
25 end?

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1 MR. ADAMS: No, I'd rather have a
2 discussion than listening to myself drone. So any
3 comments, questions at this point?

4 (No response.)

5 MR. ADAMS: So first we'll talk about what
6 the status of license renewals are. In house we have
7 21 applications for license renewal. Eighteen are
8 considered to be in the backlog. We have a metric on
9 the amount of time that an application has been in
10 house, and once it passes that metric, we consider it
11 to be backlog versus being in a current queue.

12 Just to give you a taste of what we have
13 been accomplishing, last year in fiscal year '08 we
14 completed the license renewals for Kansas, Ohio and
15 Oregon, and so far this fiscal year we've completed
16 the Missouri University of Science and Technology.
17 Some of you might know that as the University of
18 Missouri, Rolla.

19 So while we're developing this process, we
20 are still moving forward, and you'll see we have plans
21 to keep moving forward even though we're developing
22 the process.

23 Any questions, comments?

24 Here's the very short, abridged history of
25 license renewal. If you go back in time, prior to

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1 1976, license renewal was an administrative process.
2 If you are a licensee and you were up for license
3 renewal, you basically submitted a license amendment,
4 asked for some period of time, three, five, ten, 20
5 years, and the NRC granted that based more on
6 administrative aspects versus what I would call
7 technical aspects.

8 In 1976 our Office of General Counsel gave
9 the staff an opinion that license renewal was a
10 significant step in the life cycle of a facility and
11 that it needed to be more than just an administrative
12 action on the part of the NRC, that a technical review
13 of the license needed to be done to insure that the
14 license and the tech specs and that the licensee could
15 continue to operate for the requested renewal period
16 while making sure that public health and safety were
17 protected.

18 So starting in 1976 and I believe the last
19 renewal that was done administratively was one for
20 Idaho State back in the '76 time frame, but after 1976
21 we started doing full reviews. Those reviews had the
22 same technical depth as initial licensing, and a
23 number of the folk, licensees that are in the room
24 today went through that process and had an NRC NUREG,
25 which captures the result of the staff's evaluations.

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1 We'll jump from the '76 all the way to the
2 late 1990s. The what I call current wave of renewal
3 applications began. Up until the late 1990s, the
4 early 2000s, we were keeping up with them. There
5 weren't that many coming in, but then two things
6 happened. A large amount of applications did come in
7 over a short period of time, and that was a legacy of
8 what had happened in the 1980s after the accident at
9 TMI. The NRC focus and resources were put on
10 responding to that, and a lot of scheduled work for
11 research reactors was put on hold, including license
12 renewal.

13 So it was sort of a parallel to the
14 situation we have today. A lot of license renewals
15 were in house, and they were dealt with over a short
16 period of time, which meant 20 years later, they all
17 came due over a short period of time.

18 So we had a spike in work load and we had
19 9/11 occur, which for several years was our main
20 technical focus, was doing the work we needed to in
21 the area of security and our security assessments, and
22 making sure that we had all of that squared away.

23 We still were doing our best to keep the
24 renewal applications that were in house moving at that
25 point in time, but for the NRC folks, it was basically

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1 something they looked at when they weren't working on
2 the security issues.

3 Also, licensees had difficulty answering
4 some of our questions that we were sending out.

5 We jump forward again a number of years to
6 just recently. In October of 2008, SECY 08-0161,
7 entitled "Renewal Research and Test Reactor License
8 Renewal Applications," was given to the Commission.
9 That was our thinking and our ideas on how we would
10 move forward on both what I call a short-term basis,
11 how we would deal with the license renewals that were
12 on the docket and in house and also on a longer term
13 basis, on what we saw license renewal looking like in
14 the future for, say, the renewal after the ones we're
15 working on now.

16 The Commission looked at the paper, voted
17 on it, and gave us what we call a staff requirements
18 memorandum, and that was dated March 26th, 2009, which
19 gave guidance to the staff on how to move forward, and
20 in a slide to come we'll talk about some of that.

21 As Kathy mentioned, we have had a couple
22 public meetings in this area. In September 2008,
23 while we were working on our SECY paper, we did meet
24 with the public and get some ideas about where they
25 saw the challenges of license renewal and where they

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1 saw us moving forward.

2 And we had a second meeting in March which
3 was just prior to getting the staff requirements memo,
4 where we focused in a little bit more. I'd say the
5 first meeting was from 50,000 feet, and the second
6 meeting we were down around 10,000 feet, and now this
7 next meeting we're down into the details of the plan
8 we're moving forward.

9 Yes.

10 MR. WEISS: This is Sy Weiss.

11 Let me ask you a question. Prior to '76
12 and during the TMI issue time frame when your view was
13 limited, there were no safety issues identified, were
14 there?

15 MR. ADAMS: Not to my knowledge. There
16 were a number of questions that came out of the
17 reviews. The staff did do what appears to be looking
18 back historically, some innovative things to get those
19 license renewals out of the way, but they were mainly
20 what I would call a traditional license renewals. I
21 was a licensee during that period of time, and I was
22 the recipient of an NRC license renewal, and it was
23 pretty intense and complete.

24 MR. WEISS: But prior to '76 when it was
25 administrative, the process still worked. There were

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1 no safety operational issues in any of the non-power
2 reactors.

3 MR. ADAMS: I guess I don't know what you,
4 when you say a safety issue what you mean.

5 MR. WEISS: Well, if you look at '76 to
6 now, there's a definite escalation in the type of
7 review going on for license renewal, and the question
8 I'm trying to get at is what is the reason for this
9 if, during the period when it was an administrative
10 process, nothing happened of safety significance.

11 MS. BROCK: So you're asking why we
12 changed?

13 MR. WEISS: Yes.

14 MS. BROCK: Is that something OGC can help
15 us with?

16 MS. UTTAL: The regulation requires
17 certain things, and I wasn't here in '76. I was still
18 in law school, but it may be that it was reviewed and
19 found out that it wasn't exactly compliant with the
20 regulations or the regulations had changed. I don't
21 know what was going on back there. So I don't know.

22 MR. ADAMS: You know, there were over the
23 years events at research reactors and, you know,
24 inspection findings that have various levels of safety
25 significance attached to them.

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1 MS. BROCK: And there's lessons learned.

2 MR. ADAMS: It hasn't been, you know, a
3 completely without anything to talk about over those
4 years.

5 MR. BUTLER: A different question. Can we
6 make a date when you actually kind of started looking
7 at streamlining, started this latest effort on
8 streamlining? How many years ago was it that you
9 started looking at trying to streamline to address the
10 backlog?

11 It was way before 2008.

12 MR. ADAMS: Yeah, it was. I mean, we had
13 informal discussions over the years about looking at
14 that. I would say that it became serious during the
15 time we were developing the SECY paper. So the
16 serious discussion was probably the 12 to 18 months
17 leading up to the SECY paper in 2008.

18 MR. BUTLER: So 2006 or something?

19 MR. ADAMS: Yeah, that's -- that's, I
20 think, when we started putting our heads together and
21 having more and more of a discussion because it became
22 clearer and clearer that we needed to look at other
23 ways to reduce the backlog that was in house.

24 MR. BUTLER: Do you know how many FTE man-
25 hours you've put in to kind of develop this

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1 streamlined process?

2 MR. ADAMS: That I don't know.

3 MR. BUTLER: A significant amount?

4 MS. BROCK: I think recently we've put in
5 a significant amount of effort. Since about the first
6 of the year there's been a significant amount of
7 effort, but going back years we have not catalogued
8 all that together.

9 MR. BUTLER: I was just curious.

10 MR. ADAMS: I would say it's, you know,
11 maybe an FTE, but not ten FTEs. Any other questions
12 on history?

13 I'll just briefly talk about regulatory
14 structure. Here's some of the things we kept in mind
15 as we moved forward. One is as everyone who's in the
16 research reactor community knows, the Atomic Energy
17 Act, Section 104 of the Atomic Energy Act prescribes
18 minimum regulation necessary to insure public health
19 and safety. It tells us, the NRC, that we need to
20 apply the minimum regulation necessary to insure
21 public health and safety.

22 And I think over the years we've been
23 aware of that. I think we've done a pretty reasonable
24 job of that, and that was one of the constraints we
25 had in mind as we were looking at how to move forward.

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1 Another one is that there is a license
2 renewal process for power reactors in 10 CFR Part 54.

3 That process does not apply. That was a conscious
4 decision that was made by the staff when Part 54 was
5 being developed. There were discussions about
6 extending that methodology to research reactors, and
7 there were a number of reasons why that wasn't done.
8 It was basically on how research reactors were
9 regulated and the other requirements that apply to
10 power reactors that did not apply to research
11 reactors.

12 So the decision was made not to sign the
13 research reactors on to the additional requirements
14 that would come with a Part 54 process.

15 Then if you look in the regulations, the
16 applicable regulations in Part 50 govern the content
17 of the application for research and test reactor
18 operating licenses. That's in 10 CFR 5033 and 5034,
19 and those regulations don't make any distinction
20 between contents of initial application and contents
21 of license renewals, and if the regulations are asking
22 for a licensee that submits information, there is an
23 assumption there that the NRC will review that
24 information as part of their deliberations.

25 How we review it, that's up to the NRC,

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1 but the NRC will consider everything that's required
2 by the regulations.

3 MR. HARDESTY: If I may interject for a
4 minute, I've had several participants say that they
5 are having trouble hearing anybody other than Al and
6 Sy. So I would remind you to please identify yourself
7 and speak up for the participants on the phone,
8 please.

9 MR. ADAMS: Is that the only pick-up
10 point?

11 MR. HARDESTY: That's our only pick-up
12 point.

13 MR. ADAMS: And the last point I want to
14 make about regulatory structure is that the
15 regulations state that the longest term that a
16 research reactor can have or a license for utilization
17 or production facility can have is 40 years. What
18 that means is at the end of the 40 years we're
19 renewing the license, but we're renewing it in the
20 form of a superseding new license, so to speak.

21 So it's a little different than just a
22 license renewal. So if you look at the amount of time
23 that has passed and if you're going to add the term of
24 license renewal you've asked for at this point, add it
25 up with how long you've been in business, and the

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1 answer is more than 40, that means that what we're
2 going to be issuing you is a superseding renewed
3 license.

4 You're not going to get a new docket
5 number. You're not going to get a new license number.

6 Your old R- number will still be yours, but from a
7 regulatory standpoint, the timers with the issuance of
8 that license are being reset to zero and starting
9 another 40-year period.

10 No, Susan will tell me what it means.

11 MR. WEISS: So does that mean we can get a
12 40-year license at this point?

13 MS. UTTAL: No, you get 20.

14 MR. WEISS: He just said it can be -- it
15 might extend beyond 40 years.

16 MS. UTTAL: No, no. The present license
17 that you have. I think the renewal, but I'm not sure.
18 I don't have my regs with me.

19 MR. ADAMS: It has been the staff practice
20 to renew licenses for 20 years, again, for a variety
21 of reasons. One in particular is there is no
22 requirement for research and test reactors to keep
23 their safety analysis reports up to date. So, you
24 know, the NRC looking at that formally once ever 20
25 years, we felt going out 40 years and looking only

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1 once every 40 years was a little too long of a time
2 period.

3 So it's a tradeoff for not having to keep
4 your SAR up to date, is that we renew the licenses for
5 20 years.

6 MR. BUTLER: But it is for a new license
7 what we just said.

8 MS. UTTAL: It's a renewed license.

9 MR. ADAMS: It's a renewed license.

10 MS. UTTAL: It will have the same license
11 number, and it will be called a renewed license.

12 MR. BUTLER: But the term is going to be
13 different? The term is different?

14 MR. REESE: Yeah, it's my understanding --
15 this is Steve Reese -- that the initial application is
16 for 40 years and regs are actually silent on research
17 reactors, but the default they fall back on is the 20-
18 year license that's required for commercial site.

19 MR. ADAMS: And from your point of view
20 this is probably transparent to a large extent. For
21 example, Steve, your renewed license was a new
22 license, and I bet you have to look real close to even
23 guess that. So it's due with some of the review
24 criteria we apply and some of the words that go in the
25 license.

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1 Do you want to add anything, Susan?

2 MS. UTTAL: No.

3 MR. ADAMS: Okay. Any other questions on
4 this issue?

5 MR. HARDESTY: I apologize for keeping
6 injecting. This is Duane.

7 Still getting a lot of complaints, Susan.
8 They cannot understand you at all. I ask that you
9 really speak --

10 MS. UTTAL: No.

11 (Laughter.)

12 MS. BROCK: Do you want to come up here?

13 MS. UTTAL: No, I'm fine where I am. I'll
14 speak up.

15 MR. ADAMS: All right. I'll move on.
16 We'll start talking about the draft interim staff
17 guidance.

18 The staff requirements memo from the
19 Commission directed us to do a number of things, asked
20 us to use a graded approach in coming up with our
21 guidance; asked us to focus on the most significant
22 aspects of renewal. We have to meet regulatory
23 requirements; asked us not to necessarily reanalyze
24 items which have been looked at in the past; and then
25 asked us to use insights from the security

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1 assessments.

2 And I think the guidance that we put
3 together meets all those constraints and criteria.
4 Also, our goal is to eliminate the backlog by
5 September 2010. That's an awful lot of work in a
6 short period of time, and we are doing a number of
7 things to aim toward success here.

8 One is developing this guidance,
9 developing the guidance. Another one is beefing up
10 our staff. Another thing we're doing is getting
11 contracting help, expertise as needed.

12 What this means then, that if you have a
13 license renewal request in with us, you're going to
14 start hearing from us this summer. We plan to work
15 closely with you. Part of the interim staff guidance,
16 one of its goals is to reduce the burden on the
17 licensees versus the traditional process. I make no
18 such claim for the NRC staff.

19 (Laughter.)

20 MR. ADAMS: We're going to commit the
21 resources we need to do this. Our burden will
22 probably go up, but you know, the goal is to get this
23 done by the time with constraints we have, while
24 making it less of a burden on you as licensees.

25 We'll work closely with you. We will have

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1 a lot of discussions with you. We will be with you
2 every step of the way. In the past we have done
3 things like asked you a set of questions, and then
4 we've been distracted to go work on other things.
5 Well, that's not going to happen here. If we ask
6 questions, we'll be there to explain them to you.
7 We'll be there to work with you.

8 And sometimes you submit answers to
9 questions, and then again we're off doing other
10 things. That won't happen in this case. Up front
11 we're going to tell you what our goal to getting the
12 work done with you is, and we're going to do our best
13 to meet that.

14 That means we're going to ask the
15 licensees to hold up their end of the bargain, which
16 will be to work with us and answer any questions we
17 have in a timely manner so we can get this done, get
18 this off your plate, too, and move on.

19 Any questions about that?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. ADAMS: So continuing to discuss what
22 the draft interim staff guidance looks like, we're
23 going to take a graded approach which is what I'll
24 call two tiers used, upper tier, lower tier, and
25 there's a break point, which is two megawatts thermal

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1 power.

2 If you're in for license renewal and you
3 have a power level of two megawatts thermal or
4 greater, you're going to undergo what I call a
5 traditional review. That means we're going to use
6 NUREG 1537 as written and use that as the staff
7 guidance for looking over the application.

8 If you're at a power level less than two
9 megawatts thermal, you will undergo what we call a
10 focused review, which the next couple of slides will
11 talk about. You might ask why two megawatts. Where
12 did we get that number from?

13 And the answer is it's a longstanding
14 transition point in the research reactor regulation,
15 and I give a couple of examples. The inspection
16 program uses it to define Class 1 versus Class 2
17 facilities. That indicates where facilities get more
18 attention from the inspection program. You see it
19 used in emergency planning. If you're greater than
20 two megawatts, normally your emergency planning zone
21 goes beyond the boundaries of your reactor building.

22 Also, you see it in security. If you look
23 at 10 CFR 7360(f), which is the sabotage rule, it's
24 applicable to research and test reactors two megawatts
25 thermal and above. And, of course, there are

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1 technical research and technical work that's been done
2 to support these decisions.

3 Along with taking a graded approach the
4 Commission asked us to look at the insights we gained
5 from doing security assessments. I can't go into the
6 details of that because most of that work was
7 safeguards, but we did look at risk, the risk that the
8 reactors presented against attributes as power level,
9 fission product inventory, doses, and what that work
10 confirmed is that the historical work, especially the
11 two -- uprate point, you know, makes sense and
12 continues to make sense.

13 So I think what I want you to come away
14 with is that it isn't a random number. It's a number
15 that makes sense from a risk and a technical point of
16 view.

17 Any comments on this slide before I move
18 forward?

19 MR. MYERS: Tom Myers, NIST.

20 Since you're using a graded approach for
21 two megawatts and above, is it reasonable that the
22 definition of a test reactor could be based not solely
23 on power level?

24 MR. ADAMS: We are not -- the work we're
25 doing here applies to the reactors that are in the

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1 renew queue at the moment, and in a minute you'll see
2 where NIST is, but, no, the work we've done here, in
3 fact, you'll see just the word "research reactors" in
4 a lot of places because what we're doing here doesn't
5 apply to test reactors.

6 And at least as part of this effort we're
7 not looking at the definition of test reactor, but the
8 other effort to look at the long-term license renewal
9 efforts, you know, that's always something that we can
10 step back and look at.

11 I know this is an issue that has
12 historically come up from time to time and the staff
13 did a number of years ago look at one petition for
14 rulemaking in this area. So the answer is, sure, it's
15 not off the table.

16 Any other questions?

17 MR. BLOUNT: this is part of the longer
18 term, if I could just add onto that.

19 MR. ADAMS: Yeah.

20 MR. BLOUNT: Part of the longer term plan
21 in this research and test reactor arena is to relook
22 at what our regulations are there, and are there
23 places where we need to be or should be looking at
24 making improvements. That could be one of them that
25 we -- well, certainly something that we want to

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1 consider.

2 Now, whether or not it happens or changes,
3 that would be for future discussion, but we wouldn't
4 want to lose that dialogue.

5 MR. WEISS: The research and test reactor
6 community could use the benefits of the backfit rule
7 and have that apply to reactors.

8 MR. ADAMS: That's a rule that technically
9 does not apply to research reactors. To apply that
10 would, you know, require analysis to be done and, you
11 know, that analysis could lead -- will lead where it
12 leads. That's also, you know, another decision that
13 we can -- you know, that the community can discuss
14 with us if you want to, if the community wants to go
15 in that direction.

16 Any more comments?

17 MR. BLOUNT: I guess part of this
18 conversation here is we want to warm you up to the
19 idea that once we move beyond this initial -- get this
20 initial piece behind us, this backlog behind us, let's
21 take a look at where we are and what's available and
22 what should we be doing because there may be some
23 enhancements that we want to take advantage of. There
24 could be a host of other areas, but we need to be
25 prepared to talk to that so that when we get there, it

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1 doesn't turn into a mad rush and we're trying to
2 figure out what is it we're going to look at or not
3 look at, I guess is really what my thought is.

4 MS. BROCK: And we are thinking of getting
5 there within the next year or so. This isn't way down
6 the line. This is pretty much right on the heels of
7 this interim process development

8 MR. BLOUNT: Right.

9 MR. ADAMS: Any other comments, questions?

10 MR. BLOUNT: Kathryn is required to get
11 this done before she can leave the branch.

12 (Laughter.)

13 MS. BROCK: I retire in 2030.

14 (Laughter.)

15 MR. FRANTZ: It is difficult to hear.

16 MR. ADAMS: Okay. I'll move on to the
17 next slide in the draft interim staff guidance, and
18 this talks about the focusing review on the most
19 significant areas, and we have what I would call the
20 primary review areas. Those are the ones that we
21 consider to have the most safety significance to them,
22 and that's the reactor design and operation, or if
23 you're familiar with NUREG 1537, that's Chapter 4 of
24 that NUREG.

25 The accident analysis, that's Chapter 13,

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1 and also looking at the technical specifications which
2 are the legal agreement on control of safety
3 significant aspects of your operation between the NRC
4 and the licensee. Those are scattered throughout the
5 SAR in various chapters. So those are the three main
6 areas we're going to focus on.

7 Then if you step back a little bit, I have
8 what I call secondary review areas: radiation
9 protection. You know, if you're a member of the
10 public, that's probably the question that jumps into
11 your mind first, is, you know, am I protected from
12 radiation. You know, they're not wondering what your
13 departure from nuclear boiling ratio is.

14 So we're looking at radiation protection,
15 how doses are calculated, and in parentheses I say
16 "inspection results inform." Here's an example where
17 we're applying some streamlining. For example, NUREG
18 1537 tells the NRC reviewer to look at your radiation
19 protection program required by Part 20.

20 What the reviewer is going to do is
21 pull -- and we're working on the details -- say, the
22 last five inspection cycles where the NRC inspectors
23 have looked at that exact same thing, the radiation
24 protection program. They look at it. They discuss
25 what it's about, and they come to a conclusion that --

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1 the inspector concludes that the licensee's radiation
2 protection program meets the regulations.

3 That's essentially the same finding we're
4 looking to make as a technical reviewer, and so we
5 will as part of what we're looking at in the area of
6 radiation protection, we'll look at the inspection
7 results of the radiation protection program.

8 So that hopefully will relieve some of the
9 burden from you as licensees of getting questions in
10 this area.

11 Likewise if we pull those inspection
12 reports and they show a troubled history, then the
13 technical reviewer will sit down and take a harder
14 look at the documentation from a reviewer end. So
15 there's an example of streamlining and taking
16 advantage of NRC's capabilities.

17 MR. BLOUNT: And actually applying the
18 performance review perspective to it. So, you know,
19 it's going to be based in part on the performance of
20 the facility.

21 MR. WEISS: I would think that if that's
22 the case, then radiation protection should be the main
23 thrust of your review. To change the GMB ratio based
24 on another calculation, that's not doing anything to
25 improve safety. Okay? It's radiation protection,

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1 things that really happen, things that occur. That's
2 where you can do some good.

3 MR. ADAMS: But to know I'm okay in
4 radiation protection, I have to know that, one, that
5 the operation is safe and, two, that there's
6 sufficient margins and, three, that we have sufficient
7 control on those margins, which is why we're looking
8 at reactor design and operation, including things
9 like, as you'll see, neutronics and thermal
10 hydraulics, to know that, one, the reactor is
11 operating safely; one, that we have a sufficient
12 margin above the operational limits that we know that
13 the reactor can tolerate reasonable upsets; and three,
14 the technical specifications which control all the
15 aspects of the operation

16 So all of that leads to findings in
17 radiation protection and accident analysis. Unlike
18 the power reactors, there is very few prescriptive,
19 technical requirements on research reactors. The
20 general design criteria doesn't apply. Station
21 blackout doesn't apply. The maintenance room doesn't
22 apply.

23 You know, I can rattle off all sorts of
24 technical power reactor rules that don't apply. What
25 does apply is meeting Part 20, and so you're right.

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1 All of this review we do, that's the bottom line, that
2 by looking at all of these things and by putting the
3 right controls in place, that we can say the net
4 result of running this reactor from both normal
5 operation and accident conditions is doses within Part
6 20.

7 So in a way, yes, we're doing exactly what
8 you're --

9 MR. WEISS: But you're basing everything
10 on calculations and from year to year, calculational
11 models change, methods change. Some people think
12 things are improving in a calculational area. Other
13 people think no.

14 You know, there's nothing really that
15 you're doing with these calculations that are
16 impacting on the reactor. Radiation protection is.

17 MR. BLOUNT: And I would certainly agree
18 with that. Radiation protection gets to the bottom
19 line, but part of what I think Al is providing for us
20 is how do we get to that bottom line.

21 The radiation protection program itself
22 provides demonstrable information that says, yeah,
23 that program is functioning the way we want. And
24 that's why we're looking at it. That's certainly why
25 we're interested in it, because we want to be able to

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1 make those assessments and judgments.

2 But by the same token we also want to
3 understand the basis behind it. What allows us to say
4 that that program has the underpinnings, has the
5 basis, has the basic building blocks to allow it to be
6 effective?

7 And where that gets to is the design and
8 operation, accident analysis in the tech specs.

9 MR. ADAMS: And I can review your
10 radiation protection program, and that won't tell me
11 if you can meet your shutdown margin. It won't tell
12 me if your excess reactivity is too high. So the
13 radiation protection is one aspect of a number of
14 things we have to look at because we still have the
15 responsibility to come to reasonable assurance of
16 public health and safety.

17 And any other questions about that aspect?

18 MR. REESE: Steve Reese from Oregon State.

19 When we are going through the review, the
20 financial considerations, we're kind of a moving
21 target for a while. Has the NRC come to some
22 equilibrium on what the requirements will be?

23 MR. ADAMS: Yes. You were early on in
24 that development. We have, I think, a pretty
25 consistent set of information we're looking for, and

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1 when we get to that with the licensees, along with our
2 questions will come examples of answers other
3 licensees have given that we found acceptable along
4 with the ability to talk to our technical reviewers to
5 get an understanding of what we're really looking for,
6 you know, how other licensees have addressed these
7 issues, where this expertise lies within your
8 organization.

9 You know, this is a little different. You
10 know, you're used to looking at technical stuff, and
11 all of a sudden we're asking financial questions, and
12 it turns out that once you find the person in your
13 university who's the expert on this, the question is
14 answered very quickly and very easily.

15 So we've done enough of these now that we
16 can now help you, you know, help point you in the
17 direction of where that person is. So I think that as
18 a licensee you'll find, you know, the questions to be
19 a lot easier to answer than the first couple that went
20 through it as we were still in our learning curve.

21 MR. REESE: Got you.

22 MR. ADAMS: And you've mentioned another
23 secondary reviewer, financial and an environmental
24 review. That's a review the NRC has to do in
25 accordance with Part 51 of our regulations to meet the

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1 NEPA requirements. So that's something we have to do.

2 We still would need your help.

3 We look at your environmental report, and
4 we may need to ask you some questions to allow us to
5 fully understand the environmental impact of continued
6 operations.

7 Questions, comments?

8 MR. HARDESTY: Before you proceed further,
9 Al, there was a question on the last slide from the
10 Webinar audience. The question was if the renewal
11 includes a power increase from less than two megawatts
12 thermal to greater than two megawatts thermal, will
13 the traditional review apply?

14 MR. ADAMS: That's interesting. We
15 haven't thought about that because we don't have any
16 of those in house. So this set of guidance we put
17 together is to address just the license renewals we
18 have in house. How we're going to move in the future,
19 that's part of the long-term plan, but, I mean, my gut
20 feeling, to answer that question would be we get a
21 full, traditional review because we're looking at a
22 reactor that we're going to license above two
23 megawatts when the renewal is done.

24 MR. HARDESTY: This is Duane again.

25 Didn't we also say that part of our

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1 criteria was that any power uprate would undergo a
2 full review?

3 MR. ADAMS: We'll get to that also.

4 Any other questions, comments?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. ADAMS: So I'll continue to talk about
7 the focused review. We will look at other parts of
8 the SAR as needed to support the focused review area.

9 For example, when we review your accident analysis if
10 we see that you take credit for engineered safety
11 features and you take credit to have those features
12 result in consequences that are acceptable, then we
13 will go and take a look at those specific engineered
14 safety features to make sure that we're satisfied that
15 they'll do their whatever actions they need to do
16 successfully.

17 Also, in the case of looking at technical
18 specification basis, that if a technical specification
19 points into a chapter that isn't getting the full
20 review, we will look at that aspect of that chapter,
21 enough of a look to make sure that the basis for the
22 technical specification is technically sound.

23 The other point is we may develop
24 independent neutronic and thermal hydraulic
25 calculations as part of our independent evaluation of

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1 your SAR. There's a number of tools we can use to
2 verify what you're telling us to supplement and our
3 knowledge of what you're telling us, and so don't be
4 surprised if you find out that we've set up the models
5 and we've run a neutronic and thermal hydraulic
6 calculation for your facility, but that's something
7 we're going to do.

8 MR. BUTLER: Are you going to do that for
9 all the facilities?

10 MR. ADAMS: It will depend on what the SAR
11 says or doesn't say. You know, we see SARs with
12 varying levels of depth of discussion in this area.

13 MR. BUTLER: We spent a vast amount of
14 resources developing doing new code work.

15 MR. ADAMS: Right. We will look at, you
16 know, we will review your code work and --

17 MR. BUTLER: -- do it I wouldn't bother.

18 (Laughter.)

19 MR. ADAMS: And you know, how much we do
20 independently depends on, you know, what we find when
21 we do the review. Okay?

22 The point I'm trying to make here is that,
23 again, what we're trying to do is manage the burden on
24 you as a licensee, and so there may be a case where we
25 do some calculations to verify what you're telling us

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1 in the SAR, but we may do the calculations so we can
2 come to our own independent understanding of what
3 you're saying to us.

4 Any questions, comments?

5 MR. WEISS: And these comments will be
6 peer reviewed and benchmarked?

7 MR. ADAMS: Uh-huh. Yes, it's not going
8 to be a code I write up in my spare time.

9 And we've been talking about what we're
10 going to do. Well, here's a slide about where things
11 will be streamlined. Here's a list of various topics
12 in the SAR, and except to carry out our reviews in the
13 primary and secondary review areas, in depth reviews
14 won't be made in these areas.

15 And I use the word "in depth." We're
16 going to read the entire SAR and say we read the
17 reactor coolant system part of your SAR and we see
18 something in there that we think will not allow us to
19 come to a reasonable assurance conclusion. Then the
20 reviewers will talk to that, talk to management about
21 that, and we'll decide what to do with that, issues
22 like that.

23 We don't expect that to be common, but
24 it's not a case where if there's something that's not
25 on the list of the primary and secondary that we're

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1 just not going to look at it at all. It is going to
2 get a --

3 MR. BLOUNT: A reading.

4 MR. ADAMS: -- a read and a level of
5 review, but it won't get an in depth level of review,
6 and if we approach you on it, it's going to be because
7 we are concerned enough about that issue that we're
8 not sure we can come to the conclusions we need to
9 come to.

10 So you can see site characteristics,
11 design of structure system components, reactor cooling
12 systems, I&C, electrical power, auxiliary systems,
13 experimental facilities and programs and conduct of
14 operations. Again, this doesn't mean we're not going
15 to look at those. We will look at these to verify
16 technical specifications. We'll look at these if they
17 get involved in the accident scenarios.

18 I don't mention emergency planning,
19 security or another one is operator requalification,
20 what I call the plans, that a couple of things could
21 happen here; that as part of your license renewal
22 application you said, "Hey, NRC, I rewrote my requal
23 plan, and we want you to look at it as part of the
24 license renewal," or, "I rewrote my security plan or
25 my EP plan."

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1 If you flag those, here's a new plan we
2 want you to look at and approve. What we will do is
3 we will sit down and the reviewers will talk to
4 management to decide what's the best path forward,
5 looking at those as part of renewal, looking at those
6 as a separate action. So we will look at those.

7 If you submitted an application to us and
8 said, "Do you know what? I've got emergency plans,
9 security plans that have been approved by NRC. I'm
10 just going to keep using those," then our response to
11 that is at least for this plan, is the answer is,
12 "Fine. You've got a plan. We've looked at it. We've
13 reviewed it. We've accepted it. We will move forward
14 from there."

15 Questions about this slide?

16 MR. WEISS: So this guidance is not really
17 impacting on what we submit. We still have to submit.

18 MS. BROCK: You've already submitted.

19 MR. ADAMS: No, you've already submitted
20 an SAR. We're going to review what you've given us on
21 the docket, and we'll get to how that will impact
22 things in a second.

23 MR. HARDESTY: There's another question
24 from the audience that asked for more clarification of
25 whether or not it meant the areas outside of the in

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1 depth reviews will not need to be updated in the SAR.

2 MR. ADAMS: Well, again, this is guidance
3 for dealing with the SARs that are already in house
4 and on the docket. So you already have an application
5 for license renewal.

6 Does that answer the question? So I'm not
7 going to send you a question and say, "Oh, submit a
8 new SAR that just talks about the focused areas."
9 We're not going to do that. We're going to review
10 what's on the docket.

11 Next slide, treatment of review issues.

12 Some folks have review requests in that
13 the NRC staff has started working on. Some folks have
14 received requests for additional information from us.

15 Oops. I'm sorry. I'm talking about a
16 subject that isn't on this slide yet. Next slide.
17 I'm sorry.

18 Requested changes outside of license
19 renewal. Forgive me. As part of license renewal it's
20 not uncommon for licensees to say, "Okay. As long as
21 I'm going through license renewal, here's some things
22 I want to change."

23 The most obvious example of that is I want
24 to increase my power, but there's also other things
25 that licensees want to change as part of license

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1 renewal. For example, Steve Reese had a requirement
2 on reactor period and asked to have that changed. So
3 there's issues like that which are sort of outside our
4 focused areas.

5 What we're going to do is ask you, the
6 licensee, to flag the changes you want to make to your
7 license, that you are making as part of license
8 renewal, and then we will determine on a case-by-case
9 basis how we will move forward on them, if we're going
10 to review them as part of the license renewal or if
11 we're going to handle that as a separate action.

12 I'm sorry. If I confused you, let me
13 know. If you have questions, I'm open for questions.

14 MR. JENKINS: Jere Jenkins from Purdue.

15 If we have already submitted but didn't do
16 those necessary flags, do we need to send you
17 something that says --

18 MR. ADAMS: We will be contacting you
19 after we -- well, in your case, you've asked for a
20 power increase. So, no, we're going to look at your
21 entire, SAR in some level of detail.

22 MR. JENKINS: We asked for a few other
23 tech spec changes as well.

24 MR. ADAMS: Yeah, but it's a case where,
25 again, if you ask for something that a pure license

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1 renewal would be nothing changes, everything stays the
2 same; that you just want more time given everything
3 stays the same, but normally license renewal is a
4 natural point in time to say, "Look. I want to add
5 something. I want to maybe subtract something. I
6 want to change some limits. I want to give myself
7 some additional capability."

8 Because before we did a complete redo of
9 the entire SAR, we caught those things; we flagged
10 those things; we reviewed those things; and we
11 specifically explained them and approved them. We
12 want to make sure that in the course of doing this
13 streamlined review that we don't miss something. We
14 would not want to inadvertently approve something that
15 we did not review and fully evaluate.

16 Any questions on that issue? Yes.

17 MR. HARDESTY: The question is: for
18 future applications is there still the expectation
19 that the applicant will fully address 1537, Part 1?

20 MR. ADAMS: That is part of what I would
21 call the long-term plan for license renewal and we're
22 still thinking about what the future will look like.
23 1537 is going to be there. How much of it gets
24 addressed as part of license renewal on a form, we're
25 still working on that, and we'll probably be coming

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1 and talking to you about that.

2 I hope that answers the question.

3 Bottom slide, use of past renewals.
4 Obviously that's one of the things the Commission
5 asked us to do is to consider what we've done in the
6 past. Past reviews can take a number of forms. It
7 could be a past license renewal. It could be that
8 you've never been licensed renewal and the last NRC
9 full review was your initial licensing, and for some
10 folks who have gone through HEU-LEU conversions
11 recently, there was a lot of review and evaluation
12 work captured there.

13 So what we're telling the reviewers is
14 they have some flexibility as they do these reviews to
15 look at what the NRC has done in the past and if that
16 information is still valid, if they review it and
17 verify it that they can use the work that's been done
18 in the past.

19 You know, there are different tradeoffs
20 here. If you go and look at, say, an NRC initial
21 licensing evaluation from like 1960, they don't go
22 into a lot of depth. They don't go into a lot of
23 reasoning. You know, some of them run three or four
24 pages. You know, a reviewer is going to have to look
25 at that and make a decision if it's easier just to go

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1 and review the SAR that's sitting on the table in
2 front of him as it is to try to figure out and
3 reconstitute, you know, something that happened 50
4 years ago and then deciding using that as a start
5 what's happened between 1960 and 2009.

6 So we're giving the reviewers to use their
7 judgment and have some flexibility. I think the
8 clearest and most concrete example of this is that the
9 licensees that have gone through HEU to LEU
10 conversions recently, those NRC reviews are going to
11 be used heavily by the reviewer as part of the license
12 renewal. So the Chapter 4, Chapter 13, a lot of that
13 for those licensees that review is already done.

14 You know, we'll make sure that nothing has
15 changed since we did that review a couple of years
16 ago, but you know, we won't be coming back to you and
17 asking the fundamental questions we did during the
18 conversion reviews. So there is an example of how we
19 will use past reviews and also reduce the burden of
20 license renewal on the licensees.

21 Any questions on that?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. ADAMS: Here's a slide I was trying to
24 explain before I got two slides in front of myself.
25 Treatment of applications and process. Some folks

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1 have -- you know, everybody who is affected by this
2 has an application sitting in house with NRC. Some of
3 them we've started to review. Some folks have
4 received requests for additional information, and if
5 you're in that category, we will be contacting you to
6 tell you that at this point in time you can stop
7 working on that request.

8 As we go through your SAR using the
9 interim staff guidance, there may be RAIs that come
10 out of that. We will get you those RAIs. In some
11 cases they might look exactly like the RAIs we sent
12 you before, but what I'm expecting is that a focused
13 set of RAIs will probably be shorter than a
14 traditional set of RAIs.

15 What if we've asked you RAIs and you've
16 answered them and they're on the docket? We're going
17 to look at those answers, and if there's something in
18 those answers which we believe needs to be followed up
19 on, we will do that.

20 What we're not going to do is leave what
21 we believe is inaccurate or incorrect information on
22 the docket. So you know, if you submit a calculation
23 to us, even if it turns out it could be out of scope
24 in the focused review, if we look at that calculation
25 and say, "Wow, they multiplied two and two together

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1 and got 47," we're going to come back and talk to you
2 about that because we want the information on the
3 docket to be complete. So we'll follow up on issues
4 identified.

5 Any questions in that area about how we're
6 going to handle applications in progress?

7 MR. STEVE MILLER: If a licensee has asked
8 for something, Jere, for instance, if he decided all
9 of a sudden in light of this that you don't want to
10 power uprate; you'll do it at another time; will you
11 have an opportunity to fix the application to reflect?

12 MR. ADAMS: The answer is, you know, we
13 will review what you ask of us.

14 MR. BLOUNT: And if I can jump in here,
15 there will be a dialogue between us and licensees on
16 the particular application. So we want to make sure
17 we understand it and also make sure, you know, how
18 we're going to address.

19 So if at that time the questions become,
20 "Hey, I really don't want this power uprate now; I'll
21 come back to you in a year or two years," five years,
22 whatever, we can look at that at that point, and I
23 think it would then be a conversation that will have
24 to say, "Okay. I understand. The application is
25 changing and this moves it out to this pot and this

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1 pot."

2 MR. ADAMS: But what becomes interesting
3 in that case is if you've handed me an application
4 that's written for a megawatt and right now you're a
5 250 kilowatt reactor and you say, "Well, forget about
6 it," I still have an application sitting in front of
7 me that's written for a higher power level, and when I
8 renew you, I'm accepting your SAR.

9 So it will become very difficult to
10 separate, you know, the different size grains of sand
11 in that application so to speak.

12 MR. STEVE MILLER: I picked something a
13 little bit less onerous, but I didn't have anything in
14 mind when I asked the question.

15 MR. ADAMS: Well, I mean, for instance,
16 let's say like in Steve's application he requested to
17 have the scram on short reactor period taken out of
18 the license and that no longer be a tech spec, and
19 let's say Steve came to me and said, "Do you know
20 what? I changed my mind. I want that to say in
21 there." I mean, that we can easily separate out and
22 handle.

23 MR. STEVE MILLER: Okay. That was more
24 the scope.

25 MR. ADAMS: Right, and that we would just

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1 document then in the SAR that the licensee requested
2 this and then, you know, withdrew that request and
3 what we've approved is X, basically continuing the
4 status quo.

5 MR. BLOUNT: I think we've got a question
6 from the audience.

7 MS. MONTGOMERY: From now on can you
8 repeat the question? When you get a question can you
9 repeat the question so we all can hear it?

10 THE REPORTER: Can you give your name,
11 please?

12 MS. MONTGOMERY: Cindy Montgomery.

13 MR. ADAMS: Are you talking --

14 MS. MONTGOMERY: Because I couldn't hear
15 Steve's question and then it became harder to follow
16 the answer.

17 MR. ADAMS: Okay.

18 MR. BLOUNT: The question is can you
19 repeat the question.

20 MR. ADAMS: Yes, I will do my best to
21 repeat the question.

22 MR. HARDESTY: The audience says that
23 would be nice

24 MR. ADAMS: The folks on the phone there,
25 there's some conversations going on in the background.

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1 If you could mute your phones if you're not directly
2 asking us a question, that would help.

3 So any other questions about applications
4 in progress, what we're planning to do about those?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. ADAMS: The next topic is opportunity
7 for hearing. If we have noticed your application for
8 opportunity for hearing, we do not plan to notice it
9 again. Your application hasn't changed. We are
10 changing the process, but that's why we're having
11 meetings like this and having a public comment. So
12 nothing should change in your application.

13 Any questions about that? Comments?

14 (No response.)

15 MR. ADAMS: Here's an issue. Someone
16 asked earlier about power increases. If you've asked
17 for a license renewal and a power increase together,
18 we will be using the what I call traditional method,
19 standard review plan of 1537 because power increases
20 can have impacts on many aspects of the facility
21 beyond what we're looking at in the focused review.
22 We can to make sure that when we do give you your
23 power increase that we've looked at it from a complete
24 point of view.

25 Steve.

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1 MR. REESE: Steve Reese.

2 I just have a question. You talk about
3 the difference between focused review and a standard
4 review. As a licensee, I'm not sure about this. It's
5 the reason why I'm asking.

6 How much effort do you spend on material
7 outside of four and 13?

8 MR. ADAMS: How much time?

9 The question was when the NRC does a
10 review how much of the effort of our review is outside
11 of four and 13.

12 No, you're right. Four and 13 are the
13 major review areas. I'd say well over half is outside
14 of those.

15 MR. REESE: Really?

16 MR. ADAMS: Yeah.

17 MR. REESE: Okay. From a licensee's point
18 of view, it would seem that most of the work was on
19 four and 13.

20 MR. ADAMS: It turns out that probably the
21 most technically significant questions will be in
22 those areas, yes.

23 MR. REESE: Okay.

24 MR. ADAMS: But as far as the work we do,
25 we look at it, you know, in the traditional review we

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1 look at the entire SAR.

2 MR. REESE: So it could save you a
3 considerable amount of time then.

4 MR. ADAMS: Again, the goal isn't to save
5 NRC time. The goal is to make things easier for you
6 as a licensee to reduce the burden of license renewal.

7 MR. BLOUNT: So part of that though is
8 also to make our process efficient and effective,
9 which goes to that. But in alignment with what Al was
10 saying, we recognize there's going to be a burden on
11 the staff. That's certainly going to be a lift.

12 MR. BUTLER: Ralph Butler.

13 I think that the goal is to reduce the
14 backlog.

15 MR. ADAMS: Yes.

16 MR. BLOUNT: Yes, and for us that's
17 efficiency and effectiveness.

18 MR. BUTLER: The question is what's the
19 question before us and while we're looking at
20 streamlining and why you're looking at streamlining
21 and see if we can reduce the backlog.

22 MR. BLOUNT: That's right. That's the
23 immediate goal, but beyond that immediate goal is
24 going to be in license renewal space, RTRs, and this
25 gets to the long-term question, why is it that we can

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1 renew -- and not trying to start an argument -- but
2 why is it we can renew a power reactor but looking at
3 a limited set of issues and we don't do something
4 similar in RTR space?

5 And right now part of the reason for that
6 is because the regulations don't necessarily address
7 that. So our longer term goal, this is going to set
8 us up to some degree to get to a new licensing, a
9 license renewal plate, but at the same time, right now
10 we need to talk about it. We need to deal with the
11 backlog.

12 MR. BUTLER: Ralph Butler.

13 I guess the question that I have is the
14 goal is to reduce the backlog by 2010. So they're
15 talking 15 months down the road, and we're working on
16 draft interim guidance. The question is to reach that
17 goal would time and resources be better spent just
18 doing the full review on all of them and getting them
19 done versus this?

20 It's just a question.

21 MR. BLOUNT: I understand.

22 MS. BROCK: The staff did talk about that
23 at length, and we came down to deciding that it was
24 going to assist us in reducing the backlog by
25 streamlining and picking out the areas that are most

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1 important for safety.

2 MR. BUTLER: But I think the question is
3 -- Ralph Butler again -- the question is, is it going
4 to streamline and reduce your level of effort enough
5 to make up for the time you spent developing the
6 process?

7 MR. ADAMS: We believe so.

8 MS. BROCK: Yes.

9 MR. BUTLER: Okay.

10 MR. ADAMS: Any other questions or
11 comments on that point?

12 MR. REESE: Steve Reese from Oregon State
13 again.

14 How many in general of the RAIs you send
15 back to licensees, how many deal with issues outside
16 of 4 and 13?

17 MR. ADAMS: I would say roughly half.

18 MR. REESE: So it's about the same as the
19 effort that you put into it?

20 MR. ADAMS: It's about the same as the
21 effort.

22 MR. REESE: Okay.

23 MS. BROCK: Pardon me. On the phone could
24 you put your phone on mute, please? This is Kathryn
25 Brock.

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1 MR. BUTLER: Hey, Steve, we can hear you
2 talking.

3 (Laughter.)

4 MS. BROCK: Thank you.

5 MR. ADAMS: Any other?

6 MS. BROCK: Did your question get
7 answered, Steve?

8 MR. REESE: Yeah, that was perfect.

9 MR. ADAMS: I'll move on then. Safety
10 evaluation report. The NRC is still going to write an
11 SER to capture the results of the review and serve as
12 a documentation of our evaluation. The format you'll
13 see will look a little different. You're used to
14 seeing, you know, 18, 19 chapters. You're probably
15 going to see an SER that has an introduction and talks
16 about the reactor, talks about technical
17 specifications, talks about accident analysis, and
18 blended in there it talks about also financial and
19 radiation protection, and you know, discusses
20 conclusions. That's going to be probably the extent
21 of it.

22 So it will be shorter than what you're
23 used to seeing, and the scope of it will reflect the
24 focused reviews.

25 MR. O'KELLY: This is Sean O'Kelly,

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1 University of Texas.

2 I was in the SER. I would still like to
3 see, although I recognize it reflected the focused
4 review, but at least NRC comments somewhere in there
5 that the other chapters were reviewed based upon some
6 other criteria so that at least it's addressed for the
7 public document of the SER. The whole package was
8 reviewed with the in depth focused review on specific
9 chapters.

10 MR. ADAMS: Right now what we're thinking
11 about is that in sort of the introduction where the
12 NRC explains what they've done, there will be a
13 statement that the review was carried out in
14 accordance with the standard review plan and the
15 interim staff guidance.

16 MR. O'KELLY: Okay. That would be fine.

17 MR. ADAMS: Yeah. I mean, for those areas
18 that I'm not digging into in depth, I'm not going to
19 try to -- I'm not going to -- you know, if I don't do
20 a review in that area, I can't document anything.

21 Any other questions, comments?

22 (No response.)

23 MR. ADAMS: Getting near the end here, and
24 the next couple of slides are for those licensees that
25 are in the queue. Where do we see you fouling up?

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1 Three reviews, NIST, MIT and the power
2 increase at MIT and Penn State that we have been
3 performing the traditional review on those licensees,
4 and we are significantly down that path, and so our
5 plan is to just finish up those license renewals using
6 the traditional review even though if we were starting
7 from scratch and we had done no work whatsoever, at
8 least in the case of Penn State we would have taken a
9 focused path, but we've done enough work on Penn State
10 that at this point we believe that's the most
11 expedient way to finish it.

12 Traditional review based on power level,
13 applying our streamline methodology, that will be MURR
14 and Rhode Island because both of those have a thermal
15 power level two megawatts or above.

16 Licensees that will get a traditional
17 review based on the fact they requested a power
18 increase are Utah, Reed, Purdue and Dow, and you
19 notice I indicate that Purdue and Dow are not in the
20 backlog.

21 What that means for scheduling purposes,
22 our initial focus is going to be looking at facilities
23 that are in the backlog and then once we knock one of
24 those off and have an opening end, then the licensee
25 that's technically not in the backlog will come into

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1 the queue and be worked on.

2 And the facilities that right now we see
3 getting a focused review, you can see the list there.

4 There's 12 of them and, again, USGS I've got them
5 flagged as not being in the backlog. USGS, Dow, those
6 applications have come in the last couple of months.

7 I just want to say a couple of words on
8 the focused review. The interim staff guidance, the
9 focus review plan, it's been made available in a draft
10 form for the public to look at and provide comments
11 on. The review plan is based on NUREG 1537. The
12 guidance tells the reviewer how to apply 1537 to a
13 focused review.

14 When we look at your technical
15 specifications, we're going to look at 1537, and also
16 we're going to pull out ANS 15.1, the 2007 version.

17 Now, I know that your applications, the
18 tech specs provided with your applications were not
19 based on the 2007 version, but given that the 2007
20 version is the latest thinking of the Standards
21 Committee, that's what we're going to use.

22 The changes between the 2007 version and
23 the prior version, I would say the changes are not
24 significant or evolutionary versus revolutionary, and
25 those areas, again, will work with you to describe

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1 those areas and work through it.

2 We're doing a number of things. One of
3 the things we're doing as an agency is we're looking
4 at the old Division 2 reg. guides, and some of those
5 reg. guides date back to the '70s. We are working on
6 updating those reg. guides and bringing them up to
7 date, and one of the things we're looking at is
8 endorsing 15.1 directly by a reg. guide. So we are
9 looking at a lot of aspects of license renewal and
10 licensing in general.

11 I think I mentioned before the NRC
12 reviewer will look at the entire SAR. The focus is
13 going to be on the significant areas for renewal, but
14 we need to make sure that there isn't something hidden
15 away in an area that's not focused that would give us
16 difficulty coming to the conclusions we need to make
17 as far as reasonable assurance of public health and
18 safety though.

19 Any questions on that?

20 MR. HARDESTY: This is a Webinar audience
21 question. It says: how will any transition cores or
22 partial loadings with LEU fuel be handled? For
23 example, if an LEU test assembly is inserted into a
24 currently loaded HEU core, will this be done under a
25 testing condition or will a SAR change be needed?

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1 MR. ADAMS: Well, that's a very
2 interesting question, and I'm going to take the easy
3 way out, and I know why that question is being asked,
4 and that's really outside the scope of license
5 renewal. HEU/LEU conversions are not going to be
6 impacted by the license renewals that we have in the
7 backlog and are clearing out.

8 And those licensees that are going to be
9 subject to conversion in the future, you know, the
10 issue about lead test elements and how they fit in
11 with current tech specs or tech specs that need to be
12 changed, you know, that's an issue we will look at and
13 address when we get there.

14 Any other questions, comments?

15 At one point I was making a Slide 21 and
16 it was moving forward discussing the detailed focused
17 review part of the ISG, but then I sort of -- one
18 thing, I was wondering if we'd have enough time to do
19 that, and you know, if there's really a desire to go
20 into that detail. However, for folks that have read
21 the focused review guidance and have questions on it,
22 I'm, you know, more than happy to entertain those
23 questions and tell you what the thinking was as we put
24 that together.

25 Any and all questions, comments?

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1 MR. REESE: I guess I keep going back to
2 the level of effort, you know, from the licensee --
3 Steve Reese. Sorry -- from a licensee's point of view
4 going through this recently, that even when we got an
5 RAI on anything but four and 13, it was essentially a
6 -- everything outside of four and 13 there's a
7 description, and so there's no analysis really.
8 You've just got to go out and describe it. So maybe
9 we didn't describe it in the way that somebody really
10 appreciates it or that wasn't clear enough, fine. We
11 can redescribe it.

12 I guess what I'm saying is everything
13 outside of four and 13 took about five minutes to
14 answer because you can go look it up or you can just
15 describe it better.

16 MR. ADAMS: But my answer is it took you
17 five minutes to answer because of the quality of your
18 application. There are some other -- the quality of
19 applications differ and the amount of depth we have to
20 go into in any area differs, and sometimes it's just
21 that, a description, but sometimes it can end up
22 being, you know, significant.

23 MR. REESE: Well, I guess I'm struggling
24 because almost everything in there, even in 1537, is
25 just a look-up, right? Look-up or describe. There's

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1 really no one else that's involved, with a couple of
2 exceptions, but almost all the time and effort was on
3 four and especially 13.

4 MR. ADAMS: Yeah, that's where the bulk of
5 the analysis will be.

6 MR. REESE: And certainly tech specs in
7 the end, but that's something you've got to do
8 regardless.

9 MR. ADAMS: And there's a lot of -- some
10 of that is description because it was looked at at
11 some point in the past. You know, I'm not looking at
12 circuit diagrams of your instrumentation and control
13 system, but at some point in the past, you know, the
14 NRC looked at that in depth, just like when the
15 licensee converted from analog to digital. You know,
16 the NRC dug into some depth or the NRC has looked at
17 your 5059 over the years.

18 So you know, there is analysis that's been
19 looked at, and it takes many different forms, but I
20 agree with you that most of the analysis is on four
21 and 13, and the changes of having significant
22 questions are more likely in those chapters, although
23 I can tell you from experience there's sometimes
24 questions. It's not unusual to have questions come up
25 in the other chapters that can be significant

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1 questions because something is missing or it may be a
2 description, but we don't do a -- you know, we go and
3 do a calculation and can't figure out, say, for
4 example, how a licensee calculates doses. We can't
5 figure out, you know, what would happen if a pool
6 would leak.

7 So you know, sometimes there's analyses on
8 these things.

9 MR. REESE: Right.

10 MR. ADAMS: Any other questions, comments?

11 MS. BROCK: I'd like to add that we're
12 going to be putting the interim staff guidance or the
13 draft interim staff guidance out in the Federal
14 Register for, I think, a 30-day comment period. So we
15 are interested in any comments you had and we want to
16 get it out in the public in a proper manner.

17 So you'll be seeing the Federal Register
18 notice pretty soon, but you have with this meeting
19 exactly what will be in the Federal Register.

20 MR. WEISS: How much time do you think
21 that will save in your review, using interim guidance?

22 MS. BROCK: Originally, before we started
23 with the focused review, we were thinking we'd be
24 doing reviews out to 2012 and now we're looking at
25 completing these reviews within 2010. So I'd say

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1 we're really catching up on some time with this
2 streamline process.

3 MR. ADAMS: And I think, you know, from
4 the past meetings we have, I think we discussed what
5 our challenges were, you know, our global challenges
6 were in some detail. So you know, we still live with
7 those challenges, and we're addressing those
8 challenges.

9 Anything else? Anybody out in Webinar
10 land, any other questions?

11 (No response.)

12 MR. ADAMS: Well, with that I guess I'll
13 call it by saying first I want to thank you for coming
14 and thank you for tuning in because I know you folks
15 are busy folks, and we appreciate your time.

16 This, what we're doing here, is very
17 important to us. Getting the backlog reduced is very
18 important to us. Doing it in a way that allows you to
19 continue to do your primary missions of education and
20 research is very important to us.

21 As we move forward we will work with you.
22 We will explain as much as we need to explain. We
23 will listen to you, and we will make sure we have the
24 resources available on our side to make this a
25 success.

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1 We ask in return if you're a licensee that
2 you work with us and that, you know, you realize we
3 are probably going to ask some questions, you know,
4 that will need some effort from you, and we ask that
5 you plan to give us that effort over the next 14
6 months.

7 And with that I'll sign off unless there
8 are any last questions or comments.

9 MS. BROCK: Okay.

10 MR. ADAMS: Thank you.

11 (Whereupon, at 2:32 p.m., the workshop was
12 concluded.)

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NEAL R. GROSS

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