

OCFO TICKET

21-Oct-09

Assigned

Item No

Priority

From

Office

To

Date

Due Date

Ticket No

Subject

Instructions

Distribution

Copies

FOR: The Commissioners

FROM: Charles L. Miller, Director
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

SUBJECT: STATUS OF DECOMMISSIONING PROGRAM—2009 ANNUAL
REPORT

PURPOSE:

This Commission Paper provides the Commission with the staff's 2009 Annual Report on the Status of the Decommissioning Report, the highlights of key decommissioning accomplishments in fiscal year (FY) 2009, as well as an outlook of activities for FY 2010. This paper does not address any new commitments or resource implications.

BACKGROUND:

In the staff requirements memorandum (SRM) to SECY-04-0024, "Recommended Changes to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) Decommissioning Program and Annual Decommissioning Program Report," dated March 12, 2004, the Commission approved several changes to the annual decommissioning report, including the publication of the annual report as a NUREG every 2 years. The SRM to COMSECY-08-0036, "Status of Decommissioning Program—2008 Annual Report," dated January 8, 2009, stated that staff should discontinue publication of the NUREG and should instead publish an annual Commission paper on the status of the decommissioning program with information substantially equivalent to that contained in NUREG-1814, "Status of the Decommissioning Program—2008 Annual Report," Revision 2, issued February 2009. Per this SRM, the 2009 Annual Report is provided to the Commission for information only.

CONTACTS: Kim Conway, FSME/DWMEP
(301) 415-1335

Richard Chang, FSME/DWMEP
(301) 415-7188

Enclosed is the 2009 Annual Report on the Status of the Decommissioning Program, which provides a comprehensive summary of the decommissioning program of the NRC. The report summarizes the status of all sites undergoing decommissioning activities since the last report, through September 30, 2009, including the decommissioning of complex materials sites, commercial reactors, research and test reactors, uranium recovery facilities, and fuel cycle facilities. The report also discusses highlights in the decommissioning program since last year's report, and it informs the Commission of decommissioning issues that the staff will address in the coming year.

DISCUSSION:

Summary of Status Update for FY 2009

As of September 30, 2009, 12 nuclear power and early demonstration reactors, 11 research and test reactors, 16 complex decommissioning materials facilities, 1 fuel cycle facility (partial decommissioning), 21 Title I uranium recovery facilities, and 11 Title II uranium recovery facilities are undergoing non-routine decommissioning or are in long-term safe storage, under NRC jurisdiction.

Progress was made during FY 2009 in the Decommissioning Program. This progress included continued progress toward completing work at complex sites where decommissioning had long been delayed, and the approval of innovative decommissioning approaches for existing sites (e.g., Zion). Throughout FY 2009, the staff also focused on the continued broadening of the Decommissioning Program to reflect a more national perspective through the NRC's Comprehensive Decommissioning Program. Information, where applicable, was collected from all Agreement States, and these voluntary responses provided valuable information on Agreement State sites. NRC staff also worked to transfer regulatory control and oversight to the State of New Jersey when it became an Agreement State in September 2009. The Commonwealth of Virginia also became an Agreement State in FY 2009.

As noted in the FY 2008 report, the character of the decommissioning program is changing as (1) successes in the past have substantially reduced the inventory of the sites in decommissioning and, (2) new facilities enter decommissioning (e.g. Hunter's Point and McClellan) and new programmatic issues arise, such as Davey Crockett depleted uranium and naturally occurring and accelerator-produced radioactive material (NARM). In addition, in FY 2009, increased emphasis has been placed on the decommissioning of legacy uranium recovery sites. This emphasis has resulted in a significant increase in interaction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and New Mexico in efforts related to the UNC Churchrock, Homestake, and Ambrosia Lake Mill sites.

Trends in Fiscal Year 2010 and Beyond

It is expected that FY 2010 will see similar trends in the Decommissioning Program as most reactors remain in a safe store mode and progress in research and test reactors is at a low level. In FY 2010, decommissioning activities are expected to be completed at the NWI Breckenridge site in Breckenridge, Michigan. As in FY 2009, staff will continue its increased interaction with other agencies in efforts related to sites such as UNC Churchrock, Homestake, and Ambrosia Lake Mill.

Although decommissioning activities at complex materials sites are expected to decline slightly in the future, new sites entering the Decommissioning Program (e.g., Army sites) and additional programmatic responsibility (e.g., decommissioning and financial assurance reviews for new fuel cycle facilities) will largely offset reductions that result from the few sites completing decommissioning. As of September 30, 2009, individual site-specific monitoring programs have only been submitted for Schofield Barracks and Pohakuloa sites; however, more sites are expected to be added to the list as the Army completes its investigation of sites with potential depleted uranium contamination.

CONCLUSION:

The staff plans to continue its close oversight of the decommissioning of nuclear power reactors, research and test reactors, complex materials sites, and uranium recovery facilities. In addition, the staff plans to develop programmatic activities that will aid in the protection of public health and safety, as well as the prevention of future legacy sites, while ensuring the efficient and effective use of its resources.

Site summaries for all decommissioning sites are accessible to the Commission and the public through the NRC's decommissioning website (<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/regulatory/decommissioning.html>). To ensure that the website is current, project managers in the Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs, the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, and the Regions routinely review and update the program information.

COORDINATION:

The Office of the General Counsel has reviewed this paper and has no legal objections. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this paper for resource implications and has no objections.

Charles L. Miller, Director
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

Enclosure:
Status of the Decommissioning
Program—2009 Annual Report