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Commission Met to Hear Comments on EP Rulemaking

On December 8, 2009, staff from the NRC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and a variety of stakeholders participated in a Commission meeting on the proposed enhancements to emergency preparedness regulations. NRC and FEMA staff began the meeting by summarizing the stakeholder input received during the comment period and describing the remaining steps in the rule-making process. The Commission then individually questioned the speakers about their presentations and the path forward for the rule-making effort. Dialogue between the staff and Commissioners touched on subjects such as the impact of the rule on new reactor applications and agency coordination during the remainder of the project.

Following the NRC and FEMA presentations, a panel of stake-

holders who had commented on the proposed rule summarized their remarks. Participants included:

- Patrick Mulligan, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Nuclear Engineering and Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors;
- Stephen Payne, North Carolina Division of Emergency Management;
- Anthony Marzano, Will County Emergency Management Agency (Illinois);
- Mary Lampert, Pilgrim Watch;
- Deborah Brancato, Riverkeeper;
- Ralph Butler, University of Missouri-Columbia; and
- Thomas Joyce, Nuclear Energy Institute.

After hearing from the stakeholders, the Commission and the

panel engaged in a discussion about their presentations and formal comment submissions. Chairman Jaczko concluded the meeting by stating, "I think on such an important area of emergency preparedness it is crucial that we continue to involve the public, that we continue to do this in a transparent way, and I think that in the end that will make for the best product."

Interesting Facts about Comments Formally Submitted for EP Rulemaking:

- NRC received 94 submissions; 687 individual comments
- 72% of comments submitted to FEMA came from State and local representatives

Voluntary Hostile Action-Based Drills Initiative Ends, Public Meeting Held to Discuss Future

For the past three years, nuclear power plants across the country have been conducting hostile action-based (HAB) drills. Hostile action scenarios are different from traditional scenarios in that they are initiated by hostile or terrorist actions that lead to simulated plant damage. These scenarios require a coordinated Federal, State, and local response to mitigate the event while simultaneously addressing the security situation. Over the past three years, in response to NRC Bulletin 2005-02 "Emergency Preparedness and Response Actions for Security-Based Events," all 64 nuclear power plant sites voluntarily conducted a hostile action drill. The voluntary initiative concluded on December 10, 2009 when Palo

Verde Nuclear Generating Station conducted its HAB EP drill.

Overall, the drills were highly successful in testing integrated response capabilities based on the unique challenges posed by a hostile action event. Good practices and lessons-learned based on NRC staff observations of these drills are contained in Information Notice 2009-19 "Hostile Action-Based Emergency Preparedness Drills", dated November 24, 2009, which is available on the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) (Accession No. ML092250360).

As part of a proposed emergency preparedness rulemaking, the NRC is looking to incorporate hostile action event scenarios into the

biennial exercise cycle. On December 17, 2009, the NRC, in coordination with FEMA, held a public meeting to dialogue with industry to identify potential opportunities to continue this learning process prior to the implementation of the proposed new exercise requirements. The meeting was well attended by members of the public, state and local emergency managers, and industry representatives. In the near-term, the NRC will be working with FEMA, industry and offsite response organizations to determine opportunities to demonstrate hostile action elements as part of a biennial exercise or separate drills. A copy of the summary and transcript from the December 17th public meeting is available on ADAMS (Accession No. ML100080128).

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Report on Risk Communications to be Published

Risk communication is the two-way exchange of information about threats, including accidents or terrorist events. The goals and tools of risk communication can be applied to transient events at nuclear power plants.

Risk communication seeks to enhance knowledge and understanding of an event, build trust and credibility and encourage dialogue between involved parties, and influence attitudes, decisions, and behaviors. These goals apply to all four major types of risk communication: 1) information and education; 2) behavior change and protective action; 3) disaster warning and emergency notification; and 4) joint problem-solving and conflict resolution

Effective risk and emergency communication (and well established risk and emergency communications plans) is important in the protection of public health and safety. The Division of Preparedness and Response has contracted with the Center for Risk Communications to develop a NUREG/Contractor's Report (CR) focused on tools and techniques for effective risk communications. This document pro-

NUREG (\n\u-\\reg):

Reports or brochures on regulatory decisions, results of research, results of incident investigations, and other technical and administrative information, published by the NRC

vides suggestions for nuclear power plant licensees and others on message development for radiological emergencies. Message development skills are critical to successful radiological risk communication to the public, the media, and other stakeholders. These skills are particularly critical to successful communication with people living within the Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) of a nuclear power plant. This NUREG/CR contains principles, strategies, and tools for producing messages that are understandable, timely, accurate, consistent, and credible.

One of the most important tools for message development is the message

map. This NUREG/CR walks the user through the process of developing effective messages by use of message mapping techniques. As defined by the US Department of Health and Human Services, message maps are "risk communication tools used to help organize complex information and make it easier to express current knowledge." Message mapping is a process by which users can:

- anticipate questions of stakeholders (interested, affected, or influential parties) before they are raised;
- decide what questions they want or need to answer and what questions should be answered by other organizations;
- develop responses to stakeholder questions in a clear, concise, and accessible format;
- promote dialogue about messages both inside and outside the organization; and
- provide spokespersons with a user-friendly guide to a set of vetted organizational messages.

Publication of this NUREG/CR is expected in the spring of 2010.

Communications Exercise Held — Reliable Comment 2009

On December 16, 2009, the NRC in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hosted an Event Communication Table Top Exercise (TTX) at FEMA's National Exercise Simulation Center in Washington DC. This TTX, referred to as Reliable Comment 2009, included participants from various Federal agencies including the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Energy Institute, the State of Arizona, Maricopa County, and the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station.

The TTX had two main goals. First, it was used to validate roles and responsibilities under the National Response Framework. Second, the TTX was used to ensure timely flow of information, including assessing how external communications and messaging are coordinated between Federal partners, State and local governments, and the licensee during reactor accident and hostile action scenarios at a nuclear power plant. The NRC and FEMA are currently working to finalize the After Action report that will capture identified good practices and areas for enhancement.

White House Highlights NRC Initiative

NSIR's project using web conferencing to increase participation in and access to public meetings related to the emergency preparedness rulemaking has been selected for inclusion in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's Open Government Initiative Innovations Gallery! The Gallery highlights projects that promote transparency, participation, and collaboration in government. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/open/innovations/webconferencing>

Upcoming Events of Interest to the EP Community

22nd Annual Regulatory Information Conference (RIC)

March 9-11, 2010

Rockville, MD

<http://www.nrcric.org>

National Radiological Emergency Planning Conference (NREP)

March 29 - April 1, 2010

Chicago, IL

<https://nationalrep.org>