Hostile Action Based Emergency Preparedness (EP) Drills

NRC regulations require that commercial nuclear power plant licensees participate in emergency preparedness exercises for evaluation. Licensees are required to conduct a full-scale exercise involving Federal, State, and local agencies at least once every two years. NRC and FEMA evaluate these exercises in order to ensure the skills of emergency responders are maintained and to identify and correct any weaknesses. NRC assesses the onsite response, while FEMA assesses the offsite response. In the interim years, licensees conduct unevaluated drills and implement lessons learned from previous drills.

After September 11, 2001, the NRC required nuclear power plant licensees to make enhancements in several areas of emergency preparedness, including:

- Alternate emergency response facilities
- Emergency response organization staffing
- Security-based Emergency Classification Levels and Emergency Action Levels
- Onsite Personnel Protective Actions

These new measures were promptly put in place, and verified by the NRC through inspections.

In recent years, the NRC also formally reviewed the emergency preparedness planning basis to ensure that it will adequately protect the health and safety of the public in light of the current threat environment. The evaluation found emergency preparedness at nuclear power plants remains strong, but could be improved in a few areas, such as communications, resource management, drill programs, and NRC guidance. The NRC is drafting new requirements that will include these improvements.

Before 2001, a limited number of emergency preparedness exercises contained simulated Hostile Actions against a nuclear power plant site. Drills before 2001 which contained Hostile Actions were very limited in scope compared to the current initiatives. A Hostile Action is an act toward a Nuclear Power Plant or its personnel that includes the use of violent force to destroy equipment, take hostages, and/or intimidate the licensee to achieve an end.

Even though the radiological consequences will be the same whether caused by a Hostile Action or a plant event, Hostile Actions would provide unique challenges for emergency responders. To prepare for these challenges, the nuclear industry has begun a voluntary initiative to conduct drills that use Hostile Action-Based (HAB) scenarios as initiating events. These drills demonstrate the licensee's ability to coordinate onsite security, operations, and emergency response personnel with offsite organizations, such as State and local emergency management and law enforcement. This important industry initiative is being incorporated into the existing emergency preparedness program as part of proposed NRC rulemaking.

During Calendar Year (CY) 2007, nine HAB EP Drills were conducted using the proposed industry guidelines. These initial guidelines were contained in Revision 0 to NEI 06-04. These first drills identified valuable additional lessons learned and aided in clarifying the unique challenges a HAB event poses to existing EP programs. Based on these lessons learned, Revision 1 to NEI 06-04, "Conducting a Hostile Action-Based Emergency Response Drill" and subsequent Regulatory Issue Summary 2008-08 were developed. The industry developed this revision to ensure consistency in the conduct of remaining HAB EP Drills through CY2009.

Significant lessons-learned from HAB EP Drills conducted to date, are available to NPP licensees via the NEI members website and to Federal, State, and local emergency response professionals via the DHS Lessons-Learned Information Sharing (LLIS.gov) website. LLIS.gov is the national network of Lessons Learned and Best Practices for emergency responders. LLIS.gov is a secure, restricted-access information database. It is designed to facilitate efforts to prevent,

prepare for, and respond to acts of terrorism and other incidents across all disciplines and communities throughout the US.

Additional details of HAB EP Drills can be found in the following documents:

Some links on this page are to documents in our Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), and others are to documents in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). ADAMS documents are provided in either PDF or Tagged Image File Format (TIFF). To obtain free viewers for displaying these formats, see our Plugins, Viewers, and Other Tools page. If you have questions about search techniques or problems with viewing or printing documents from ADAMS, please contact the Public Document Room staff.

Date	Description
03/19/2008	NRC Regulatory Issue Summary 2008-08, Endorsement of Revision 1 to Nuclear Energy Institute Guidance Document NEI 06-04, "Conducting a Hostile Action-based Emergency Response Drill"
11/09/2007	Public Meeting on the Status of Security-Threat Based EP
11/7-11/8/2007	NEI Workshop Presentations
10/30/2007	Revision 1 to NEI 06-04, "Conducting a Hostile Action-Based Emergency Response Drill"
05/18/2007	Supplement to NEI 06-04
08/06/2006	Revision 0 to NEI 06-04, "Guideline for the Development of Emergency Preparedness Drill and Exercise Threat-Based Scenarios"
07/19/2006	NRC Regulatory Issue Summary 2006-12, Endorsement of Nuclear Energy Institute Guidance "Enhancements To Emergency Preparedness Programs For Hostile Action"
11/18/2005	Industry White Paper, entitled "Enhancements To Emergency Preparedness Programs For Hostile Action" (Revised November 18, 2005)
07/18/2005	NRC Bulletin 2005-02: Emergency Preparedness and Response Actions for Security-Based Events

Since HAB EP Drills are currently being conducted as an Industry initiative, the NRC's role is that of an observer. In this role the NRC works with NEI to ensure consistent application of Revision 1 to NEI 06-04 and assists NRC staff in informing proposed rulemaking leading to the formal incorporation of HAB scenarios into the existing EP biennial exercise cycle. HAB EP Drills also provide opportunities to train NRC personnel on the unique challenges posed by security events and allow for NRC incident response personnel participation in these drills.

If you would like to provide input or comments about HAB EP Drills, please contact us.