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Bamford, Peter

From: Jones, Cynthia (NSIR)
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2009 4:15 PM (OPA) (OPA)
To: Burnell, Scott; Sigmon, Rebecca; Couret, Ivonne; Screnci, Diane
Cc: Brown, Frederick; Cheok, Michael; Thorp, John; Thomas, Eric; Bamford, Peter; Hayden, Elizabeth; Sheehan, Neil; Mallett, Bruce; Virgilio, Martin; Wiggins, Jim; HOO Hoc
Subject: RE: TMI INES Rating = Why not include a statement in the next press release @ the INES rating for our international counterparts?

Importance: High

Scott, Rebecca-

I understand about the reluctance to issue an INES rating for a Level 0 event, since we typically report events Level 2 and above. But what does OPA and EDO say about the proposal to add the INES rating on the next NRC press release to answer Qs from the international countries and Media? INES is intended to report the safety significance of events and a short statement about this being rated at INES level 0 would immediately respond to the many inquiries we (I) have had.

I think this is a very simple solution to the inquiries from a total of 7 countries and PAHO received thus far within the last 24 hours.

Pls advise, as I need to address (as the National US Officer for INES) why the US is not responding to these international inquiries with an INES rating as we have previously indicated we would do so on media events of substantial interest.

thanks
Cyndi

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From: Burnell, Scott
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2009 1:53 PM
To: Sigmon, Rebecca; Couret, Ivonne; Screnci, Diane
Cc: Brown, Frederick; Cheok, Michael; Thorp, John; Thomas, Eric; Bamford, Peter; Jones, Cynthia; Hayden, Elizabeth; Sheehan, Neil
Subject: RE: TMI INES Rating

OPA advises providing the EN as an informal response to requests for more information. A formal INES report would likely be misinterpreted as adding to the safety significance of what occurred.

From: Sigmon, Rebecca
Sent: Monday, November 23, 2009 12:01 PM
To: Couret, Ivonne; Burnell, Scott; Screnci, Diane
Cc: Brown, Frederick; Cheok, Michael; Thorp, John; Thomas, Eric; Bamford, Peter; Jones, Cynthia
Subject: TMI INES Rating

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In accordance with MD 5.12 and as noted in IN 2009-27 and RIS 2002-01, the NRC will submit events to the IAEA International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale (INES) publicly available NEWS website if they are determined to have a rating of Level 2 or higher, or if the rating is specifically requested by the IAEA or another INES member state. The high activity over the weekend reported by TMI-1 in EN 45514 generated sufficient media interest that the IAEA and at least three other countries have requested more information. This event as currently reported is a **Level 0**, that is, "Below Scale."

The IAEA would like to see the INES scale used not just for significant events, but also to demonstrate the low safety significance of other highly publicized events, a category which would include what happened 11/21 at TMI. Given the usual nature of the postings to the website though, it would not necessarily be seen in that light, and posting it to the IAEA website could instead serve to amplify coverage of an event that has already been covered in detail in the media. We would only want to post this event if, in the opinion of OPA, Region-1, and NRR management, the posting would serve to emphasize the low safety significance of an event which has received substantial coverage. I have attached a draft copy of the Event Rating Form (ERF) that would be submitted, which primarily contains information from the licensee's Event Notification, for your review, and would appreciate your opinions on the matter.

Thanks,

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