

June 11, 2010

MEMORANDUM TO: R. W. Borchardt
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Charles A. Casto **/RA/**
Deputy Regional Administrator
Region IV

SUBJECT: GROUNDWATER TASK FORCE REPORT

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the results of the Groundwater Task Force's (GTF) actions taken in accordance with your March 5, 2010. That memorandum established a team of U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) leaders and experts to: (1) reevaluate the recommendations made in the Liquid Radioactive Release Lessons Learned Task Force final report dated September 1, 2006 (ML062650312); (2) review the actions taken in SECY-09-0174, "Staff Progress in Evaluation of Buried Piping at Nuclear Reactor Facilities" (ML093160004); and (3) review the actions taken in response to recent releases of tritium into groundwater by nuclear facilities. The purpose of the review was to determine whether the NRC's taken or planned actions in response to recent events and to the recommendations made in the 2006-Liquid Radioactive Release Lessons Learned Task Force Report need to be augmented in order for the NRC to remain effective. The enclosed report provides the GTF's response to this request.

In completing this task, the GTF conducted reviews of the 2006 Liquid Radioactive Release Lessons Learned Task Force final report referenced above, two workshops held with external stakeholders, public comments, specific actions taken in response to events since 2006, Reactor Oversight Program guidance, meetings and interfaces with external State and Congressional stakeholders, international practices, NRC regulatory framework, and communications methods used with external stakeholders. As requested in the Charter, the GTF also reviewed the current practice of using a threshold when assessing licensee and NRC actions in response to unplanned and unmonitored release of radioactive material to groundwater incidents and assessed whether a different threshold should be used.

The GTF concluded that although the NRC 10 CFR Part 20 release limits are adequate to protect public health and safety, there are actions the NRC could take to improve its effectiveness. The GTF also concluded that the thresholds used by the industry initiative for reporting and responding are adequate. However, there are actions the NRC should consider in responding to those reports.

R. Borchardt

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While the enclosed report provides the GTF's specific conclusions, there are also several key themes that the GTF believes inform the existing regulatory framework for groundwater incidents. Those themes, specific conclusions, and recommendations are documented in the enclosed report and its appendices.

The GTF is grateful for the many individuals who contributed to the creation of this report. The NRC values were apparent throughout the GTF's review.

Enclosure:
As stated

While the enclosed report provides the team’s specific conclusions, there are also several key themes that the team believes inform the existing regulatory framework for groundwater incidents. Those themes, specific conclusions, and recommendations are documented in the enclosed report and its appendices.

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