

# **ADAMS Document Data Entry Information**

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## ARKANSAS HEIGHTENED OVERSIGHT CONFERENCE CALL

NRC Attendees	Arkansas Attendees
Randy Erickson, RSAO	Renee Mallory, Branch Chief
Rachel Browder, RSAO	Bernard Bevill, Section Chief
Chuck Cain, DNMS	Jared Thompson, Program Leader
Janine Katanic, FSME	Steve Mack, Health Physicist
	Tammy Kriesel, Health Physicist
	Kayla Avery, Health Physicist
	Angela Minden, Health Physicist

### Summary

During the week of October 26-30, 2009, an IMPEP review team performed a review the Arkansas Radiation Control Program (the Program), in part, to determine if the period of Heightened Oversight imposed on the Program in 2007 could be relaxed. The review team noted several improvements in the program, but also identified additional issues that needed programmatic attention. The review team acknowledged that while the Program made significant improvements in problem areas, they had not yet demonstrated a period of sustained performance in any of these areas.

The review team also closed previous recommendations, opened new recommendations, and ultimately recommended to the Management Review Board (MRB) that the period of Heightened Oversight continue. On January 14, 2010, the MRB met and agreed with the review team's recommendation and the period of Heightened Oversight was extended for an additional 18 months.

Following the MRB meeting, the Program requested assistance with the development of an updated Program Improvement Plan (the Plan), and on March 4-5, 2010, NRC staff members met with the Program to assist with the development of an updated Plan. The Program submitted the plan on March 11, 2010. NRC staff review of the Plan concluded that the tasks, assignments, and milestones assigned to each recommendation were reasonable and achievable. In a letter dated March 22, 2010 (ML100760131) to the Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer for the Department, NRC notified the State that the Plan, as submitted, meets the requirements of the Heightened Oversight Process.

Following approval of the plan, an informal meeting with the Program was held on April 20, 2010, in Newport, Rhode Island, in conjunction with the 2010 Conference of Radiation Control Program Director's Meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to briefly discuss the initial implementation of the Plan.

Subsequently, on July 19, 2010, NRC held the initial Heightened Oversight call with the Program to discuss the status of their updated Plan, dated June 30, 2010 (ML102000554). The Program reported that they have completed one of the four recommendations and are making progress on the remaining three and expect them all to be completed by the next IMPEP review.

The first recommendation involves actions taken by the Program to stabilize staffing and ensure the Program is successfully implemented. The Program reported it was encouraged by the recent passage of the Training Plan Pay Grid which would reward the staff with significant salary increases as they attend and pass additional advanced classes. However, the Program submitted a newly issued memorandum from the Director of the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration freezing any actions that would result in pay increases. This includes the Training Plan as well as cost of living adjustments, longevity increases, etc. These will remain in effect until the economy in Arkansas improves.

The second recommendation involves updating existing procedures to ensure they reflect current Program practices, and development of new procedures to fully document how the Program functions. These procedures are to ensure consistency and serve as a knowledge management tool for newly hired staff. Program management reported that responsibility for procedure development has been disseminated to the inspectors who are working on them as time allows. Several existing procedures have been updated and new procedures are being drafted. Following management approval, they are adopted and implemented. The Program believes they will have completed procedure development by the next IMPEP review.

The third recommendation involves the development of an action plan to reduce the licensing renewal backlog. During the call the Program reported that all staff is engaged in this process and they have seen some reasonable success in reducing the licensing backlog. The Program has reviewed certain renewals of licensees with good inspection histories and has temporarily extended some of these. The Program has a goal of completing 40 license renewals from the MRB held on January 14, 2010, and the next IMPEP tentatively scheduled for spring of 2011. To date, they have completed and issued 17 license renewals. The Program continues to use contracted individuals to assist in the process.

The fourth recommendation involves the development and implementation of a license termination procedure. This was completed on January 11, 2010, when the staff received training on the new procedure. This recommendation will be reviewed during the next IMPEP review.

NRC staff has been encouraged by the Program's ability to contract with a former employee to assist them with licensing activities and is further encouraged by the Program's continued progress towards elimination of the licensing backlog.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Erickson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a stylized "E".

Randy Erickson  
Regional State Agreements Officer

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MLXXXXXXXXXX

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