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Criteria for Preparation and Evaluation of Radiological Emergency Response Plans and Preparedness in Support of Nuclear Power Plants

Criteria for Utility Offsite Planning and Preparedness

Final Report

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N. Exercises and Drills

Planning Standard

Periodic exercises are (will be) conducted to evaluate major portions of emergency response capabilities, periodic drills are (will be) conducted to develop and maintain key skills, and deficiencies identified as a result of exercises or drills are (will be) corrected.

Evaluation Criteria

1. a. An exercise is an event that tests the integrated capability and a major portion of the basic elements existing within emergency preparedness plans and organizations. The emergency preparedness exercise shall simulate an emergency that results in offsite radiological releases which will require response by offsite response organizations. Exercises shall be conducted as set forth in NRC and FEMA rules.

   b. An exercise shall include mobilization of offsite response organization resources adequate to verify the capability to respond to an accident scenario requiring response. This includes the demonstration of offsite response organization capabilities to interface with non-participating State and local government. The offsite response organization shall provide for a critique of the biennial exercise by Federal and offsite response organization observers/evaluators. The scenario should be varied from exercise to exercise such that all major elements of the plans and preparedness organizations are tested within a six-year period. Each organization should make provisions to start an exercise between 6:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. Exercises should be conducted during different seasons of the year. At least one exercise shall be unannounced.

2. A drill is a supervised instruction period aimed at testing, developing and maintaining skills in a particular operation. A drill is often a component of an exercise. A drill shall be supervised and evaluated by a qualified drill instructor. The offsite response organization shall conduct drills, in addition to the biennial exercise at the frequencies indicated below:

   a. Communication Drills

      Communications between the licensee and the offsite response organization within the plume exposure pathway Emergency Planning Zone shall be tested monthly. Communications with Federal emergency response organizations and offsite response organizations within the ingestion pathway shall be tested quarterly. Communications between the nuclear facility, offsite response organization's operations centers, and field assessment teams shall be tested annually. Communication drills shall also include the aspect of understanding the content of messages. If practicable, attempts should be made to include non-participating organizations in the monthly communications drills.