

OIP NOTE TO COMMISSIONER ASSISTANTS

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	<p>Date: May 14, 2008</p>	
	<p>Subject: STATUS OF INFORMATION ON CHINA NUCLEAR FACILITIES FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE</p>	
	<p>Comment: The Chinese government has not provided an official status on any of its nuclear facilities following the earthquake. The un-official statement NRC received from the State Environment Protection Administration (SEPA) is that "China must first focus on saving those alive and still trapped in the rubble and dealing with the aftermath of citizens killed before calculating and reporting on the status on facilities of international concern." Although no civilian nuclear power plants were directly affected, there are two sensitive nuclear facilities near the areas hardest hit by the earthquake. The Chengdu region of Sichuan Providence houses the Nuclear Power Institute of China which has five research reactors, including the High Flux Engineering Test Reactor (HFETR), a 25 MW reactor that converted from HEU to LEU in 2007. The HFETR, which now operates with 19.5% LEU fuel, formally used 90% HEU. The second reactor is located at the China Academy of Engineering Physics in Mianyang. The Mianyang facilities are considered the equivalent of the US-DOE Los Alamos National Lab. Chengdu and Mianyang are located in or near the areas most devastated by the earthquake (50 and 90 miles from epicenter, respectively). Both NRC and US Embassy-Beijing staff have attempted to obtain immediate information on the facilities affected by the earthquake. NRC staff continues to pursue China's sharing of the information as it is a requirement under the Protocol for Cooperation on Nuclear Safety Matters signed by NRC Chairman Dale Klein and SEPA Vice Minister LI Ganjie on January 7, 2008.</p>	
	<p>Contact: Cindy Rosales-Cooper, OIP, 415-1168</p>	
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