

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AND STATE MATERIALS
AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS
OFFICE OF NUCLEAR MATERIAL SAFETY AND SAFEGUARDS
OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
OFFICE OF NEW REACTORS
WASHINGTON, DC 20555

January 17, 2012

**NRC REGULATORY ISSUE SUMMARY 2012-01
AVAILABILITY OF SAFETY CULTURE POLICY STATEMENT**

ADDRESSEES

All U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licensees, certificate holders, permit holders, authorization holders, holders of quality assurance program approvals, vendors and suppliers of safety-related components, and applicants subject to NRC authority. All Agreement State Radiation Control Program Directors, State Liaison Officers, and other interested stakeholders.

INTENT

The NRC is issuing this regulatory issue summary (RIS) to inform addressees of the availability of the Commission safety culture policy statement. No specific action or written response is required. The NRC is also providing this RIS to Agreement States for their information and for distribution to their licensees, as they deem appropriate.

BACKGROUND

The NRC recently published in the *Federal Register* (76 FR 34773; June 14, 2011), its policy statement on safety culture, which is attached for your reference. The agency developed the safety culture policy statement over a 3-year period, during which it engaged in extensive outreach with a broad range of stakeholders.

This policy statement sets forth agency expectations that individuals and organizations involved in NRC-regulated activities establish and maintain a positive safety culture proportionate to the safety and security significance of their activities and the nature and complexity of their organizations. The safety culture policy statement applies to all licensees; certificate holders; permit holders; authorization holders; holders of quality assurance program approvals; vendors and suppliers of safety-related components; and applicants for a license, certificate, permit, authorization, or quality assurance program approval, subject to NRC authority. In addition, the Commission encourages the Agreement States, their licensees, and other organizations interested in nuclear safety to support the development and maintenance of a positive safety culture within their regulated communities.

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SUMMARY OF ISSUE

“Safety culture” refers to the core values and behaviors resulting from a collective commitment, by leaders and individuals, to emphasize safety over competing goals to ensure protection of people and the environment. The safety culture policy statement is not a regulation and, as such, does not impose requirements; rather, the safety culture policy statement complements agency regulations and guidance. The Commission expects the members of the regulated community to take the necessary steps to promote a positive safety culture by fostering the nine traits outlined in the policy statement as those traits apply to their specific activities. A trait, in this case, is a pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving that emphasizes nuclear safety. The traits included in the safety culture policy statement are (1) leadership safety values and actions, (2) problem identification and resolution, (3) personal accountability, (4) work processes, (5) continuous learning, (6) environment for raising concerns, (7) effective safety communication, (8) respectful work environment, and (9) questioning attitude.

The NRC has developed a brochure (NUREG/BR-0500, “Safety Culture Policy Statement,” issued June 2011) that is intended to aid stakeholders in understanding the safety culture traits. The safety culture brochure describes the development of the policy statement and defines the phrase “nuclear safety culture” and the traits of a positive nuclear safety culture.

The policy statement, including relevant background documents, *Federal Register* notices, meeting notices, and presentations made at public meetings, can be accessed on the NRC’s safety culture Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/regulatory/enforcement/safety-culture.html>. The Web site also includes the safety culture brochure and tools (e.g., case studies) that support the policy statement. Spanish versions of the safety culture policy statement and the safety culture brochure are available on the Web site.

BACKFIT DISCUSSION

This RIS requires no action or written response. Any action on the part of addressees in accordance with the guidance contained in this RIS is strictly voluntary and, therefore, is not a backfit under any regulatory requirement in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*. Consequently, the staff did not perform a backfit analysis.

FEDERAL REGISTER NOTIFICATION

The NRC did not publish a notice of opportunity for public comment on this RIS in the *Federal Register* because this RIS is informational and does not represent a departure from current regulatory requirements.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT

This RIS is not a rule as designated by the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 801–808) and, therefore, is not subject to the requirements of the Act.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT

This RIS does not contain any information collections and therefore, is not subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.).

CONTACT

If you have any questions about this RIS, please contact the technical staff member listed below or the appropriate regional office.

/RA/

Brian J. McDermott, Director
Division of Materials Safety
and State Agreements
Office of Federal and State Materials
and Environmental Management Programs

/RA/

John D. Kinneman, Director
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

/RA/

Timothy J. McGinty, Director
Division of Policy and Rulemaking
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

/RA/

Laura A. Dudes, Director
Division of Construction Inspection
and Operational Programs
Office of New Reactors

Contact: Cindy Flannery, FSME/DILR
(301) 415-0223
E-mail: cindy.flannery@nrc.gov

Enclosure:
Final Safety Culture Policy Statement (76 FR 34773; June 14, 2011)

Note: NRC generic communications may be found on the NRC Public Web site,
<http://www.nrc.gov> under NRC Library/Document Collections.

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