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Interim Staff Guidance Augmenting NUREG-1537, Parts 1 and 2, for the Production of Radioisotopes

Comment On: NRC-2011-0135-0006
Guidelines for Preparing and Reviewing Licensing Applications for the Production of Radioisotopes

Document: NRC-2011-0135-DRAFT-0008
Comment on FR Doc # 2011-26472

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RULES FOR PARTICIPATING

General Comment

The National Organization of Test Research and Training Reactors (TRTR) is pleased to submit the attached comments for review.

Attachments

TRTR Comments_NPR□ISG□2011□002

SUNSI Review Complete
Template = ADM-013

E-RIDS = ADM-03
Add = M. VOHL (MHV)



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14 November, 2011

To: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

Subject: Proposed Interim Staff Guidance (ISG) for NUREG-1537 (NPR-ISG-2011-002)

The National Organization of Test, Research, and Training Reactors (TRTR) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed ISG for NUREG-1537 (NPR-ISG-2011-002), as described in the Federal Register (76FR 63668) dated October 13, 2011. These comments represent a summary of comments representative of most non-power research reactor facilities, but are not inclusive of all comments.

General Comment

Research reactors are utilization facilities designed specifically for scientific research and education. As such, research reactors do not produce electricity and are designated as *non-power*. The thermal power level of research reactors is generally *hundreds to thousands of times lower* than nuclear power production facilities. As a result, research reactors produce significantly lower levels of radiation and have very limited thermal hydraulic energy, resulting in minimal to no release and dispersal of radioactivity in the event of an accident. Their smaller size and simpler designs provide minimal risk to public health and environment. While often stated, it serves well to repeat and note the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, directs the Commission to impose the minimum regulation required to protect the public health and safety and permit the conduct of widespread and diverse research and development.

Specific Comments

1. *The Plain Writing Act*, signed into law in 2010 and subsequent Executive Order 13563 require that documents and regulations be written as *clear and concise* and understandable. The proposed ISG document fails to specify the precise intended application of the guidance. Specifically, the ISG is presented as augmentation to NUREG 1537 where non-power reactors are used for the production of radioisotopes. However, it is not clearly stated as such. The *purpose* statement located in the *introduction* of the ISG could be interpreted such that the augmented ISG applies to all Research and Test Reactors (RTRs). TRTR requests clarification and a precise indication as to the intended application of the proposed ISG document.
2. At present, it would appear the majority of the existing RTRs are not subject to the additional guidance presented in the proposed ISG. However, there is a concern the proposed ISG may negatively impact RTRs that produce or may produce limited amounts of radioisotopes for research and education purposes, either directly or through a separation process. TRTR requests clarification and a precise indication that limited radioisotope production for research and education purposes is excluded from the proposed ISG document.

Respectfully,

Leo Bobek

Chairman, National Organization of Test, Research and Training Reactors