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J. Lian (KSL1)

2011 Reactor Oversight Process External Survey

Thank you for participating in the survey. Your feedback is important to us and will be used in the ROP self-assessment program to evaluate the effectiveness of the ROP. There are 20 items in the survey and places for written comments. We seek constructive feedback to improve the program, and your comments with **specific examples** are welcomed. If you are filling out a hard copy, please use additional sheets for comments if needed.

Because your comments will not be edited to remove any identifying or contact information, the NRC cautions you against including any information in your submission that you do not want to be publicly disclosed.

The survey ends on January 13, 2012.

Instruction: For each of the statements, please indicate if it's **reasonably** true. If you don't have enough knowledge/experience, please select U/A (unable to answer).

1. The performance indicator (PI) program provides useful insights, particularly when combined with the inspection program, to help ensure plant safety and/or security.

- Yes Can you
 No recommend any
 U/A improvements?

The PI system is stale and can be managed to make them look good. While this may be fine for EP PIs, this can be done at the expense of doing timely maintenance on mitigating systems. There have also been way too many

2. Appropriate overlap exists between the PI and the inspection programs to provide for a comprehensive indication of licensee performance.

- Yes Can you
 No recommend any
 U/A improvements?

The inspections done to check PI reporting accuracy are basically prevented from enforcement by declaring everything minor unless you find the one reporting error that would have pushed a plant across a threshold. This is

3. NEI 99-02, "Regulatory Assessment Performance Indicator Guideline," provides clear guidance regarding performance indicators.

- Yes Can you
 No recommend any
 U/A improvements?

The basic guidance has been totally overcome by the FAQ process creating so many special cases and loopholes. It has become like the tax code - too many deductions are available in the fine print.

4. PI program effectively contributes to the identification of performance outliers based on risk-informed, objective, and predictable indicators.

- Yes Can you
 No recommend any
 U/A improvements?

This statement is true for EP and radiation safety, but wrong for the others. Inspections actually identify outliers that are having performance issues. Most PIs can be "managed" to show green.

5. Information contained in inspection reports is relevant, useful, and written in plain English.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

6. The inspection program adequately covers areas that are important to plant safety and/or security and is effective in identifying and ensuring the prompt correction of performance deficiencies.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

I agree with the statement in general. However, it is time to add some flexibility into the baseline inspection program. In particular, te regions should have some flexibility to shift samples between resident IPs to focus on

7. The Significance Determination Process (SDP) results in an appropriate regulatory response to performance issues.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

The phase 3 SDP process is under-staffed (SRAs) and overly burdensome (mostly to management). The resources needed to process a phase 3 and a subsequent regulatory conference with all the attendant work is not adequately

8. The NRC takes appropriate actions to address performance issues for those plants outside the Licensee Response Column of the Action Matrix.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

NRC does not adequately budget for the management workload needed for plants outside Column 1.

9. Information contained in assessment reports is relevant, useful, and written in plain English.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

Assessment reports have very little useful information to licensees. The assessment process takes place behind closed doors, the information reviewed is never identified, and the conclusions are one discussed at a very high level,

10. The ROP safety culture enhancements help in identifying licensee safety culture weaknesses and focusing licensee and the NRC attention appropriately.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

This statement is only true for plants that get up into Column 3 or 4. We have no leg to stand on below this. In fact, we get lots of extra allegations because nuclear workers have many false ideas about what SCWE, safety culture, and

11. ROP oversight activities are predictable (i.e., controlled by the process) and reasonably objective (i.e., based on supported facts, rather than relying on subjective judgment).

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

12. The ROP is risk-informed, in that actions and outcomes are appropriately graduated on the basis of increased significance.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

13. The ROP is understandable and the processes, procedures, and products are clear and written in plain English.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

MC 0612 is a huge factor in this, and it continues to have lots of confusion related to the finding assessment process where you have to assess both traditional enforcement and the performance deficiency. Please fix this. NRR

14. The ROP provides adequate assurance, when combined with other NRC regulatory processes, that plants are operated and maintained safely and securely.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

This assurance is relative to having all indications of safety being lagging indicators. The other regulatory processes are going to have to improve following the events at Fukushima.

15. NRC actions related to the ROP are high quality, efficient, realistic, and timely.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

Processing greater than green findings is inefficient, burdensome, and inherently untimely. Average time from onsite inspection to issuing the final color is about 9 months. The huge increase in workload falls on the senior

16. The ROP ensures openness in the regulatory process.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

17. There are sufficient opportunities for the public to participate in the process.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

Probably too many. The NRC does not budget for all the public meetings and attendant travel, and at most sites, the public participation is almost non-existent.

18. NRC is responsive to public's comments and inputs on the ROP.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

19. The ROP has been implemented as defined by program documents.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

20. The ROP does NOT result in unintended consequences.

- Yes Can you
- No recommend any
- U/A improvements?

Which of the following groups best describe your affiliation/interest?

- State/Local Government
- Public (interested member of the public or public interest groups)
- Industry (licensee and its employees, INPO, NEI, etc)
- Other:

Please press the Submit Survey button, or mail a hard copy to:

Cindy Bladey
Chief, Chief, Rules, Announcements, and Directives Branch
Office of Administration (Mail Stop: TWB-05-B01M)
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555_0001

Paperwork Reduction Act

This survey contains information collections that are subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). These information collections were approved by the Office of Management and Budget, approval number 3150-0197, which expires August 31, 2012.

The burden to the public for these voluntary information collections is estimated to be 45 minutes per response. The information gathered will be used in the NRC's self-assessment of the reactor oversight process. Send comments regarding this burden estimate to the Information Services Branch (T-5 F53), U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by Internet electronic mail to INFORMCOLLECTS.RESOURCE@NRC.GOV; and to the Desk Officer, Chad Whiteman, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, NEOB-10202, (3150-0197), Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503.

Public Protection Notification

The NRC may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a request for information or an information collection requirement unless the requesting document displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Submit Survey

Comments extracted from the comment fields:

1. The PI system is stale and can be managed to make them look good. While this may be fine for EP PIs, this can be done at the expense of doing timely maintenance on mitigating systems. There have also been way too many examples of NRR approving licensee FAQs that undercut the validity of the PI reporting. Licensees have also been deliberately slow submitting FAQs to allow older PI hits to drop off before a new one would go on the record, thereby avoiding a white PI. Fort Calhouns and Wolf Creek have done this repeatedly over the past 4 years. The system is full of loopholes. The different thresholds between BWRs and PWRs in indefensible and should be corrected. Some PIs have such high thresholds that they have never had a white one in any plant. This should be corrected or the PI eliminated as a waste of resources. The scrams PI has too high a threshold. You would have to have 8 times the national average before you go white?? Also, the MSPI is a black-box calculator that cannot be checked, cannot be understood or interpreted, and when it is in danger of going white, licensees change their risk models to make the performance look good. MSPI needs to get replaced with more simple indicators. See the Region IV memo by Mike Runyan and George Replogle on this subject.

2. The inspections done to check PI reporting accuracy are basically prevented from enforcement by declaring everything minor unless you find the one reporting error that would have pushed a plant across a threshold. This is unacceptable.

6. I agree with the statement in general. However, it is time to add some flexibility into the baseline inspection program. In particular, the regions should have some flexibility to shift samples between resident IPs to focus on declining performance areas. For example, if a plant has a great fire protection program but is doing poor operability evaluations, we should be able to do less FP walkdowns and more op eval reviews.

7. The phase 3 SDP process is under-staffed (SRAs) and overly burdensome (mostly to management). The resources needed to process a phase 3 and a subsequent regulatory conference with all the attendant work is not adequately budgeted.

9. Assessment reports have very little useful information to licensees. The assessment process takes place behind closed doors, the information reviewed is never identified, and the conclusions are one discussed at a very high level, provided the plant exceeded a very high threshold. A huge fraction of the discussion and the output is focused on cross-cutting aspects, which is the least important part of the inspection program. We continue to send the wrong message about what is important by doing this.

10. This statement is only true for plants that get up into Column 3 or 4. We have no leg to stand on below this. In fact, we get lots of extra allegations because nuclear workers have many false ideas about what SCWE, safety culture, and chilled environment really mean. We need to better educate the workers.

13. MC 0612 is a huge factor in this, and it continues to have lots of confusion related to the finding assessment process where you have to assess both traditional enforcement and the performance

deficiency. Please fix this. NRR and OE still do not understand each others' processes, and until they do, this will never make sense to inspectors.

15. Processing greater than green findings is inefficient, burdensome, and inherently untimely. Average time from onsite inspection to issuing the final color is about 9 months. The huge increase in workload falls on the senior inspectors and management.