

April 2, 2012

ORGANIZATION: National Organization of Test, Research, and Training Reactors

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF MARCH 12, 2012 PUBLIC MEETING ON
INTERPRETATION OF REACTOR OPERATOR REQUIREMENTS FOR
RESEARCH AND TEST REACTORS

On March 12, 2012, a Category 2 public meeting was held between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and representatives of the National Organization of Test, Research, and Training Reactors (TRTR) at NRC Headquarters, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss NRC staff's development of an interpretation for non-power reactor licensees of the requirements of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Section 50.54(m)(1) and to solicit input from the licensees and members of the public.

The public meeting was well attended by members of the TRTR. Members of the public were not in attendance. The presentation slides used by NRC at the meeting are available in the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) under Accession No. ML120680670. Enclosure 1 contains the meeting attendee list.

On April 6, 2010, the University of Texas at Austin (UT) submitted an application to change its technical specifications to remove the requirements that a senior operator be present during "initial start-up and approach to power" as used in 10 CFR 50.54(m)(1). In its application, UT noted that "[i]nitial start-up is not explicitly defined for test and research reactors in the regulations" (ADAMS Accession No. ML101330271). The NRC staff noted a lack of consistency in the licensees' interpretation of the phrase "initial start-up and approach to power" as used in 10 CFR 50.54(m)(1). The staff also notes that there is no publicly available staff guidance on 10 CFR 50.54(m)(1).

Because of the confusion over the meaning of this regulation, the staff decided to provide the licensees some form of guidance regarding its meaning.

Following an in depth reading of 10 CFR 50.54, the staff agreed that many terms in the section were not explicitly defined for research and test reactors and may be subject to differing interpretation. The staff agreed to solicit input from the licensees and the public on the meaning of these terms as related to Research and Test Reactors (RTRs).

At the meeting, the staff presented and discussed the requirements of 10 CFR 50.54(m)(1) and proposed interpretations for various terms as related to RTRs. The staff was interested not only on the "why" of a particular definition but also its safety significance. The proposed interpretation for "initial start-up and approach to power" generated much discussion and comments from the attendees.

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Public Meeting Feedback forms were distributed to the attendees for their comments or suggestions on the acceptable interpretations. One Feedback form has been received to this date thanking the staff for holding the meeting.

The staff will consider all comments received during the meeting and via Feedback forms to formulate an acceptable interpretation which will be submitted for public comments.

Please direct any inquiries to Alexander Adams 301-415-1127, or Alexander.Adams@nrc.gov.

/RA/

Patrick J. Isaac, Senior Project Manager
Research and Test Reactors Oversight Branch
Division of Policy and Rulemaking
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:

1. Meeting Attendee list

cc w/encl: See next page

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Package No.: ML120800066, Meeting Notice: ML120550624

Meeting Slides No.: ML120680670, Meeting Summary No.: ML120800069 TEMPLATE No.: NRC-001

OFFICE	DPR/ PRLB/PM	DPR/PROB/PM	DPR/PROB/LA	DPR/PRLB/BC	DPR/PROB/PM
NAME	SLynch	PIsaac	GLappert	JQuichocho	PIsaac
DATE	3/23/12	3/26/12	3/29/12	3/30/12	4/2/12

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List of Meeting Attendees
 March 12, 2012
 NRC Headquarter

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Alexander Adams	Senior PM	USNRC
Robert Nelson	Deputy Director DPR	USNRC
Patrick Isaac	Senior PM	USNRC
Linh Tran	Senior PM	USNRC
Xiaosong Yin	PM	USNRC
Jason Lising	PM	USNRC
John Adams	SL Non-Power Rx	USNRC
Cindy Montgomery	PM	USNRC
Susan Uttal	OGC	USNRC
Jessie Quichocho	BC PRLB	USNRC
Duane Hardesty	PM	USNRC
Don Wall	Director	Wash State Univ.
Jere Jenkins	Director	Purdue Univ.
Guy Steingass	Reactor Supervisor	UC Davis
Leo Bobek	Reactor Supervisor	UMass - Lowell
Sean O'Kelley	Ops Manager	NIST
Ian Gifford	SRO	AFRRI
Steve Miller	Director	AFRRI
Melinda Krahenbul	Director	Reed Coll.
Mark Trump	Associate Dir Ops	Penn State
Steven Reese	Director	Oregon State
Reuven Lazarus	SRO	Reed
John Fruits	Reactor Mgr	Miss – Columbia
Les Fyoto	Associate Director	Miss – Columbia
George Miller	Director	UC Irvine
Daniel Hughes	Ass Ops Mgr	NIST
Dan Cronin	Director	Univ. Florida

cc:

Sandra Warren, General Manager
Aerotest Operations Inc.
3455 Fostoria Way
San Ramon, CA 94583

Stephen Miller, Reactor Facility Director
Armed Forces Radiobiology
Research Institute
Naval Medical Center
8901 Wisconsin Ave.
Bethesda, MD 20889-5603

Paul J. O'Connor, Facility Director
Dow Chemical Company
1602 Building
Midland, MI 48674
David Turner, Manager

David Turner
Vallecitos Nuclear Center
General Electric Company
6705 Vallecitos Road
Sunol, CA 94586

Jay F. Kunze, Reactor Administrator
Idaho State University,
College of Engineering
921 S. 8th Avenue, Stop 8060
Pocatello, ID 83209-8060

Jeffrey A. Geuther, Manager
KSU Nuclear Reactor Facility
112 Ward Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506-5204

Thomas Newton, Director of
Reactor Operations
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
138 Albany Street
Mail Stop MITNRL-NW12
Cambridge, MA 02139

Melinda Krahenbuhl, Director
Reed Reactor Facility
Reed College
3203 SE Woodstock Blvd.
Portland, OR 97202-8199

Sean O'Kelley, Deputy Director
NIST Center for Neutron Research
National Institute of Standards and
Technology
U.S. Department of Commerce
100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 6101
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-6101

Andrew Cook, Manager
Nuclear Reactor Program
Department of Nuclear Engineering
North Carolina State University
Campus Box 7909
2500 Stinson Drive
Raleigh, NC 27695-7909

Andrew Kauffman, Associate Director
The Ohio State University
Nuclear Reactor Laboratory
1298 Kinnear Road
Columbus, OH 43212-1154

Steven Reese, Director
Radiation Center, A100
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331-5903

Kenan Unlu, Director
Breazeale Nuclear Reactor
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802-2301

Jere Jenkins, Director
Radiation Laboratories
Purdue University
Nuclear Engineering Bldg.
400 Central Dr.
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2017

Barry Klein, Facility Director
UC Davis McClellan Nuclear Research
Center
5335 Price Avenue
McClellan, CA 95652

Sastry Sreepada, Director
Reactor Critical Facility
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
110 8th Street
Nuclear Engineering and Science Building
Room 1-10 MANE Department
Troy, NY 12180

Terence Tehan, Director
Rhode Island Nuclear Science Center
Rhode Island Atomic Energy Commission
16 Reactor Road
Narragansett, RI 02882-1165

Yassin Hassan
Department Head, Nuclear Engineering
Texas A&M University
129 Zachry Engineering Center
3133 TAMU
College Station, Texas 77843-3133

W. Daniel Reece, Director
Texas Engineering Experiment Station
Texas A&M University
1095 Nuclear Science Road, Mail Stop 3575
College Station, Texas 77843-3575

Tim DeBey, Reactor Supervisor
U.S. Geological Survey
6th and Kipling
Denver Federal Center, Building 15
P.O. Box 25046, MS 974
Denver, CO 80225-0046

Ralph Butler, Director
Research Reactor Center
University of Missouri-Columbia
1513 Research Park
Columbia, MO 65211

William Bonzer, Reactor Manager
Nuclear Reactor Facility
University of Missouri-Rolla
1870 Miner Circle
Rolla, MO 65409-0630

Robert Busch, Chief Reactor Supervisor

George E. Miller, Director
Nuclear Reactor Facility
Department of Chemistry
University of California
1102 Natural Sciences 2
Irvine, CA 92697-2025

Kelly Jordan
Director, University of Florida Training Reactor
106 UFTR Building
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-8300-6400

Mohamad Al-Sheikhly, Reactor Director
University of Maryland Training Reactor
Department of Materials & Nuclear
Engineering
College Park, MD 20742

Leo Bobek, Reactor Supervisor
University of Massachusetts Lowell
Research Reactor
Nuclear Radiation Laboratory
One University Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

Donald Wall, Director
Nuclear Radiation Center
Roundtop Drive
Washington State University
Pullman, WA 99164-1300

Robert Agasie, Reactor Director
Nuclear Reactor Laboratory
University of Wisconsin- Madison
1513 University Avenue, Room 1215
Madison, WI 53706-1687

Tatjana Jevremovic, Director
TRIGA Nuclear Research Reactor
University of Utah
122 S. Central Campus Drive
Room 104
Salt Lake City, UT 84112

Paul Whaley, Associate Director

Chemical and Nuclear Engineering Department
University of New Mexico
MSC 01-1120, FEC 209
Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001

Nuclear Engineering Teaching Lab
University of Texas at Austin
ETL-PRC Bldg 159
10100 Burnet Rd
Austin, TX 78758

