

November 7, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Macfarlane
Commissioner Svinicki
Commissioner Apostolakis
Commissioner Magwood
Commissioner Ostendorff

FROM: Mark A. Satorius */RA/*
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: TASKING TO DEVELOP INTERIM STAFF GUIDANCE FOR
INTEGRATED SAFETY ANALYSIS IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

This memorandum requests Commission approval for staff to discontinue its development of (1) interim staff guidance (ISG) on integrated safety analysis (ISA) implementation issues (work item tracking system [WITS] 201200232); and (2) information on how the ISAs would be conducted in the absence of the American Nuclear Society (ANS) standard (WITS 201300125).

Staff Requirements Memorandum SRM-SECY-12-0091, "Completeness and Quality of Integrated Safety Analyses," issued October 9, 2012, directed staff to request that the American Nuclear Society (ANS) develop an ISA standard that would provide clear guidelines for licensees. The SRM also approved staff's recommendation to improve ISA guidance, but in a limited fashion until the ANS standard is complete. Specifically, the SRM directed the staff to issue ISG only on those narrow topics previously identified by the staff as needing clarification to address ISA implementation issues, such as use of passive design features, bounding assumptions, initial conditions, and the completeness of ISA summaries. Also, SRM-SECY-12-0071, "Final Rule: Domestic Licensing of Source Material – Amendments/ Integrated Safety Analysis," directed staff to develop a discussion on reviewing ISAs without the ANS standard.

As directed, the staff requested ANS to develop an ISA standard. ANS agreed and formed a standards working group, which includes a Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff representative and several fuel cycle industry representatives. The working group has met several times, and a draft standard is expected to be delivered to the appropriate consensus committee by December 2013. In accordance with ANS procedures, the draft standard would also be made available to the public for comment.

Based on staff participation in the working group, and review of a proposed Table of Contents, the draft ANS standard is expected to cover the topics intended for the interim guidance (e.g., use of passive design features, bounding assumptions, initial conditions, and the completeness of ISA summaries). Thus, the staff believes that continued development of ISG on ISA implementation issues is no longer necessary, as the standard being developed by the ANS is expected to provide adequate guidance on these issues.

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In keeping with standard practice, once the ANS issues its ISA standard, the staff will review and endorse the document as appropriate. In the meantime, staff will continue to review the annual ISA summary updates required of licensees pursuant to 10 CFR 70.72(d) and perform ISA-related inspections using the guidance such as NUREG-1520, "Standard Review Plan for the Review of a License Application for a Fuel Cycle Facility." The staff notes that it has not identified any generic issues related to ISA implementation (e.g., the use of passive design features, bounding assumptions, initial conditions, and the completeness of ISA summaries) that results in additional licensing actions.

Further, the NRC staff is currently engaged in a number of discussions with the fuel cycle industry on the cumulative effects of regulation. This is a holistic approach that encompasses the effort expended to interact, review and comment on various fuel cycle interests. Discontinuing the staff's development of ISG on ISA implementation issues would reduce the burden on both industry and the NRC in developing guidance for areas that will be covered in the ANS standard. The staff has discussed this matter with the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), which stated that the staff's development of ISG on ISA implementation issues is, in NEI's view, of low priority.

Based on the scope and progress of the ANS ISA standard, recent staff interactions with the industry on ISA guidance, and the impact of this effort on the cumulative effects of regulation, the staff recommends that its development of ISG on ISA implementation issues be discontinued, and that the WITS item be closed out. Additionally, given the progress of the ANS ISA standard, and the absence of any generic concerns during routine ISA updates, the staff recommends that efforts to develop an approach for reviewing ISAs without an ANS standard be discontinued, and that the WITS item be closed out.

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