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United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Protecting People and the Environment

PRE-DECISIONAL ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE

Louisiana Energy Services, LLC (LES)
February 28, 2014 9:00 AM
NRC Region II Office,
Atlanta, Georgia

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PRE-DECISIONAL ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE AGENDA

I. OPENING REMARKS, INTRODUCTIONS, AND SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES
   Victor McCree, Regional Administrator, Region II

II. NRC ENFORCEMENT POLICY
   Thomas Marenchin, Enforcement Specialist, Office of Enforcement

III. STATEMENT OF CONCERNS / APPARENT VIOLATIONS
   James Andersen, Deputy Director, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards

IV. LICENSEE PRESENTATION
   Louisiana Energy Services, LLC (LES), Site Management

V. BREAK / NRC CAUCUS

VI. NRC FOLLOWUP QUESTIONS

VII. CLOSING REMARKS
   Victor McCree, Regional Administrator, Region II

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The first apparent violation involves the failure of the management measures to ensure that items relied on for safety (IROFS) were implemented such that they were available and reliable.

Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR) 70.62(d) requires, in part, that management measures shall ensure that engineered and administrative controls and control systems that are identified as items relied on for safety (IROFS) pursuant to § 70.61(e) of this subpart are designed, implemented, and maintained, as necessary, to ensure they are available and reliable to perform their function when needed, to comply with the performance requirements of § 70.61 of this subpart.

Contrary to the above, prior to September 10, 2013, the licensee's management measures failed to ensure that IROFS54a and IROFS54b were implemented such that they were available and reliable to perform their function. Specifically, Operations was providing an incorrect tare weight to the recycling technicians who were implementing IROFS54a and IROFS54b. Instead of the actual tare weight (i.e.: the mass of the empty bottle), Operations had been providing the results of the previous measurement taken when the bottle was removed from the cascade, which represented the sum of the true tare weight and the mass of any uranium contents. Consequently, when the Recycling technician subtracted the incorrect tare weight from the gross weight, the mass of any uranium contents was effectively cancelled from the calculation. Given that both IROFS54a and IROFS54b were consistently implemented in a way that resulted in the elimination of uranium mass from calculations and that the intended function of these IROFS is to track and control mass, the licensee failed to ensure the IROFS were available and reliable to perform their function.

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The second apparent violation involves the failure to report the loss of all IROFS preventing a criticality.

10 CFR Part 70 Appendix A (a)(4) requires, in part, that an event or condition such that no IROFS, as documented in the Integrated Safety Analysis (ISA) summary, remain available and reliable, in an accident sequence evaluated in the ISA, to perform their function in the context of the performance requirements in Sections 70.61(b) and 70.61(c), or prevent a nuclear criticality accident (i.e., loss of all controls in a particular sequence) be reported to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Operations Center within one hour of discovery.

Contrary to the above, on September 10, 2013, the licensee failed to report that after the loss of IROFS54a and IROFS54b, no IROFS, as documented in the ISA summary, remained available and reliable to prevent an accident sequence leading to a nuclear criticality. IROFS54a and IROFS54b are the only IROFS credited with preventing a criticality in the small component decontamination train enclosure; therefore, all controls on that particular sequence were lost.