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NRC Issues Annual Assessments for Nation's Nuclear Plants

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued annual assessment letters to the nation's 100 operating commercial nuclear power plants regarding their performance in 2013. As of the end of December, 89 plants were in the two highest performance categories.

“These assessment letters are an annual report card on the performance of the nation's nuclear power plants,” said Ho Nieh, director of the Division of Inspection and Regional Support in the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. “We ensure nuclear power plants are safe by inspecting them and rating their performance regularly, as part of our mission to protect people and the environment.”

Of the 89 highest-performing reactors, 80 fully met all safety and security performance objectives and were inspected by the NRC using the normal inspection program. Nine reactors were assessed as needing to resolve one or two items of low safety significance. For this performance level, regulatory oversight includes additional inspection and attention to follow up on corrective actions.

The plants requiring additional inspection are: Browns Ferry 3 (Ala.); Clinton (Ill.); Fitzpatrick (N.Y.); Grand Gulf 1 (Miss.); LaSalle 2 (Ill.); Point Beach 2 (Wisc.); Prairie Island 2 (Minn.); Robinson (S.C.); and Turkey Point 3 (Fla.). Robinson has resolved their issues since the reporting period ended and has transitioned to the highest performing level.

Nine nuclear reactors were in the third performance category with a degraded level of performance. For this category, regulatory oversight includes more NRC inspections, senior management attention and oversight focused on the cause of the degraded performance. These plants were Browns Ferry 2 (Ala.); Duane Arnold (Iowa); Monticello (Minn.); Pilgrim (Mass.); Point Beach 1 (Wisc.); Sequoyah 1 and 2 (Tenn.); Susquehanna 2 (Pa.); and Watts Bar 1 (Tenn.). Sequoyah 1 and 2 and Watts Bar 1 have resolved their issues since the reporting period ended and have transitioned to the highest performing level.

One reactor, Browns Ferry 1 in Alabama, is in the fourth performance category and requires increased oversight because of a safety finding of high significance, which will include additional inspections to confirm the plant's performance issues are being addressed.

Fort Calhoun plant in Nebraska is currently under a special NRC oversight program distinct from the normal performance levels because of an extended shutdown with significant performance issues. The oversight panel cleared the unit to restart in December, but the plant will remain under

special oversight until the panel returns it to the regular program. Therefore, the plant will not receive an annual assessment letter.

Later this spring and summer, the NRC will host a public meeting or other event in the vicinity of each plant to discuss the details of the annual assessment results. A separate announcement will be issued for each public assessment meeting. In addition to the annual assessment letters, plants also receive an NRC inspection plan for the coming year.

The NRC routinely updates information on each plant's current performance and posts the latest information as it becomes available to the [action matrix summary](#). The annual assessment letters sent to each operating reactor licensee (as well as mid-cycle assessments issued each September) are also available through the NRC's webpage on the [Reactor Oversight Process](#). Annual construction assessments for new reactors at the [Vogtle and Summer sites](#) and at [Watts Bar 2](#) are also on the NRC website.