

**POLICY ISSUE**  
**(Notation Vote)**

December 31, 2014

SECY-14-0148

FOR: The Commissioners

FROM: Mark A. Satorius  
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR "PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT  
COORDINATOR" POSITION IN RESPONSE TO STAFF  
REQUIREMENTS MEMORANDUM - SECY-14-0078

PURPOSE:

To obtain Commission approval of the Executive Director for Operation's (EDO's) plan to create a new position to enhance interactions with the public by directing them to the appropriate avenue to address complaints and concerns within the agency's regulatory responsibility.

SUMMARY:

Following Commission direction, the staff has prepared the plan detailed below for a new "Public Engagement Coordinator" position. Activities in the plan include: acquiring a rotation, developing the position's roles and responsibilities, staffing the position, and informing both internal staff and external stakeholders about the new position. Once the Commission approves the fiscal year 2015 (FY15) Implementation Plan, the staff will begin taking steps toward creating and filling the position.

BACKGROUND:

In Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM)-COMAMM-14-0003, "Fiscal Year 2016 High-Level Planning Guidance," dated June 30, 2014, the Commission directed the staff to provide an analysis and recommendation for creating a new position to enhance interactions with members of the public by directing them to the appropriate avenue to address complaints and concerns within the agency's regulatory responsibility.

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In SRM-SECY-14-0078, "Analysis and Recommendation of Consideration of New Agency Position to Direct Public Concerns," dated September 5, 2014, the Commission approved implementation of both Option 1 (implement enhancements to current framework) and Option 3 (create a new position to direct the public to appropriate processes and conduct follow-up) of the staff's paper beginning in FY 2015. The Commission approved the title of the new position as "Public Engagement Coordinator" (the Coordinator) and approved having the position reside in the Office of the EDO (OEDO).

In the SRM, the Commission directed that, before the end of the first quarter of FY15, the staff should provide the Commission with an implementation plan for how it will execute the direction to combine Option 1 and Option 3, including the procedures and tools that will be developed to both define and support the new position. Additionally, the plan should explain how potential concerns associated with establishing the new position will be addressed. This paper responds to that direction.

In addition, in SRM-COMAMM-14-0005, "Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Proposal," dated September 5, 2014, the Commission directed the staff to seek Commission approval for how the agency will fund resources to initiate this effort in FY15 in the FY15 Appropriation Implementation Plan. The Commission also directed that the staff should include funding for the new position for enhanced public interaction by adding one full-time equivalent (FTE) in the FY16 budget.

#### DISCUSSION:

The Coordinator would serve as an agency point of contact for the general public and public nongovernmental organizations for raising complaints and concerns, as well as seeking answers to questions. This position would also serve as a resource for individuals who are uncertain about how to pursue raising their issue. The Coordinator would determine the nature of a given topic, direct individuals to the appropriate processes and staff members, confirm that the individual and appropriate NRC staff have connected, and ensure the NRC point of contact appropriately follows up and closes the request. It is important to emphasize that this position would not replace any of the avenues the public currently uses to communicate with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff. Adding another step if individuals already know where to go would likely create inefficiencies and might be viewed as making the agency less responsive or more bureaucratic to the public than the current approach.

The Coordinator would also conduct follow-up tracking on the resolution of complaints and concerns and collect feedback from users. Follow-up would achieve the following:

- Help ensure that individuals' issues were properly handled.
- Allow the agency to gain information on views from the public on the effectiveness of various processes in resolving their issues.
- Permit monitoring of trends in the types of issues received.

In addition, if an individual was not satisfied with the resolution of an issue, the Coordinator could assist in identifying additional processes or alternatives that might be available.

Specific details on how staff will execute the direction to combine Option 1 (implement enhancements to current framework) and Option 3 (create a new position to direct the public to appropriate processes and conduct follow up), including the procedures and tools that will be developed to both define and support the new position—are provided below. A timeline for these activities is provided in the table below. The timeline uses January 15, 2015, as the date the Commission approves the FY15 Implementation Plan. If this date changes, the specific dates provided throughout the timeline would change accordingly.

### Public Engagement Coordinator Schedule

	Activity	Finish Date
	Commission approval of FY15 Implementation Plan	1/15/2015
1.0	Acquire rotation	03/23/2015
2.0	Staff position	08/13/2015
3.0	Develop position roles and responsibilities	06/01/2015
4.0	Communicate new agency position	09/22/2015
5.0	Enhance NRC internet (Ongoing)	04/09/2015
6.0	Enhance NRC operator (Ongoing)	06/04/2015

Creating the new position will require several actions by OEDO, with support from various offices.

#### 1.0 Acquire rotation

A rotational opportunity to OEDO, with the purpose of helping establish the new position, will be posted; candidates will be interviewed, and one will be selected.

#### 2.0 Staff position

OEDO will work with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer to draft a position description and classify and post the position.

#### 3.0 Develop position roles and responsibilities

Staff will conduct research and analysis to develop the new position's roles and responsibilities, as well as inform development of position-related documents and products:

- Conduct meetings with internal stakeholders: OEDO, with support from various offices will receive input from agency individuals and groups that interact with the public or manage avenues that handle public concerns. OEDO will work with members of the Communications Council to identify opportunities for identifying and sharing good practices and lessons learned across the agency related to accepting and addressing public concerns. Examples of areas that could be

shared include relevant training, office-level guidance, and tips and advice for responding to challenging situations.

- Receive public feedback: OEDO, with support from various offices, will collect views from the public on the existing opportunities to interact with the agency and to raise concerns and complaints. This would be done by leveraging planned public meetings and other outreach sessions and soliciting input as part of those sessions. The staff would identify the events where there would be diverse participation and opportunity to collect useful input, especially from groups that the agency has not interacted with much in the past. The staff will analyze the results to identify other improvements or changes that could be made to the agency's current approach and practices for accepting and responding to issues from the public.
- Research best practices at other agencies: OEDO, with support from various offices, will conduct research involving the activities of other agencies to learn best practices the NRC could adapt.
- Identify public engagement gaps: Using insights from this research, staff will identify potential gaps in the agency's public engagement.
- Finalize roles and responsibilities: Staff will use the research noted above to inform and finalize development of the new position's roles and responsibilities.
- Develop position procedures and processes: The research will also be used to develop procedures and tools for the position such as desk guides, tracking sheets, templates, any necessary databases, and report formats that establish how the position will:
  - Refer members of the public to other NRC positions, organizations, and processes.
  - Track issues and concerns received from the public.
  - Collect feedback from the public.
  - Report on trends and themes from issues received periodically.
  - Identify emergent or existing trends indicative of issues or gaps in internal or external communications or processes.
  - Recommend measures to resolve issues and gaps.
  - Continue to leverage external expertise on applicable topics.

Staff will place emphasis on ensuring that the new position's activities:

- Do not hamper or interfere with the timely administration of existing processes, such as:
  - Creating clear communications on scope of position.
  - Putting measures in place during development of procedures and tools.
- Providing opportunity for contacts of existing processes to review and give input during development of procedures and tools.
- Do not create perceptions of interference with communications intended for the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Actions to be considered include:
  - Holding regular coordination meetings to share information on concerns being received.
  - Integrating Management Directive 7.4, "Reporting Suspected Wrongdoing and Processing OIG Referrals," into procedures and tools as appropriate, as they are developed.
  - Developing a process to document issues that are referred to the OIG.
  - Providing OIG opportunity to review and give input during development of procedures and tools.
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#### 4.0 Communicate new agency position

OEDO staff will develop and implement a communications and roll out strategy to provide information about the Coordinator position to NRC staff and external stakeholders, including issuing an agency announcement, providing an NRC Reporter story, issuing a press release, posting a blog entry, providing e-mails to external stakeholders using agency listservs, and updating the NRC's Web site.

The position will include additional responsibilities related to public engagement as decided upon by the EDO.

#### 5.0 Enhance NRC Internet

The Office of Information Services (OIS), with input from the Office of Public Affairs and OEDO, have begun working on enhancements to the "Contact Us" Web page on NRC's public Web site to make it more comprehensive, visible, informative, and easy to use. Once simple improvements have been made, staff will discuss the need for additional, more resource-intensive improvements.

#### 6.0 Enhance NRC Operator

OEDO and OIS staff will develop any needed additional tools and identify any resources to properly handle calls from the public who have concerns or complaints, or request information, especially those that may not have access to the NRC's Web page or otherwise know who to contact.

To address potential concerns that the functions assigned to the Coordinator could interfere with existing process, OEDO staff coordinated with staff from OIG, OIS, the Office of Enforcement, and the Office of Investigations, among others. As the Coordinator's functions are not meant to replace any of the existing means the public currently uses to communicate with the NRC staff, the Coordinator will familiarize him or herself with all of these means. When contacted by a member of the public, the Coordinator will ask a series of questions to determine how best to assist the individual, including determining the NRC process the individual should be referred to. This referral will be made with a minimum amount of information collected as to not discuss any information that the Coordinator does not need to know. A graphic representation of this process can be found in the enclosure. Offices that may receive referrals from the Coordinator will be provided an opportunity to review and give input on the process during its development.

The Coordinator will be in routine contact with the offices named above, as well as other offices that have the lead for certain processes the public can use, to ensure referrals are being conducted properly, the Coordinator is aware of current processes, and that the Coordinator is not interfering with the work of the office.

#### COMMITMENTS:

Once the Commission provides approval, the staff will implement the actions detailed in this paper. As directed by the Commission, the EDO or another appropriate party within the NRC, will provide the Commission with an evaluation of the efficacy of the new position for enhanced public interaction, as well as any unintended consequences of the position, 24 months after the position is filled.

#### RESOURCES:

The proposed FY15 implementation plan to the Commission will identify and request one FTE to execute this work. For FY16, one FTE has been included in the OEDO budget request. No additional resources are required to complete this work. Should additional resources become necessary during FY16, they will need to be reallocated from lower priority work, or requested using the Agency's shortfall process. Resources for this work in FY17 and beyond will be considered using the agency's Planning, Budgeting, and Performance Management process.

The Commissioners

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COORDINATION:

The Office of the General Counsel has reviewed this paper and has no legal objection.  
The Office of the Chief Financial Officer has reviewed the paper and has no objection.

***/RA by Darren Ash for***

Mark A. Satorius  
Executive Director  
for Operations

Enclosure:  
Public Engagement Coordinator  
(Process for Interactions)

The Commissioners

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**COORDINATION:**

The Office of the General Counsel has reviewed this paper and has no legal objection.  
The Office of the Chief Financial Officer has reviewed the paper and has no objection.

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