

August 4, 2015

MEMORANDUM TO: Mark A. Satorius
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Annette L. Vietti-Cook, Secretary */RA/*

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS – SECY-15-0077 – OPTIONS FOR
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR SMALL MODULAR
REACTORS AND OTHER NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The Commission has approved the staff's recommendation to initiate a rulemaking to revise regulations and guidance for emergency preparedness (EP) for small modular reactors (SMRs) and other new technologies, such as non-light-water reactors (non-LWRs) and medical isotope production facilities.

The staff should keep the Commission's previous direction from the Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM) for SECY-14-0038, "Performance-Based Framework for Nuclear Power Plant Emergency Preparedness Oversight," in mind. That SRM stated "The staff should be vigilant in continuing to assess the NRC's emergency preparedness program and should not rule out the possibility of moving to a performance-based framework in the future. The Commission notes the potential benefit of a performance-based emergency preparedness regimen for small modular reactors." This rulemaking provides an opportunity for the staff to further explore the pros and cons of a performance-based EP framework.

For any small modular reactor reviews conducted prior to the establishment of a rule, the staff should be prepared to adapt an approach to emergency planning zones for SMRs under existing exemption processes, in parallel with its rulemaking efforts.

Some aspects of the technical work on the ongoing "Power Reactors Transition to Decommissioning" rulemaking, which also addresses emergency preparedness, and staff actions to address Tier 3 post Fukushima items, will inform the technical work on the SMR emergency preparedness rulemaking. The staff should coordinate these efforts, as appropriate; however, the two rules should be developed separately so as not to delay the decommissioning rulemaking, which should be completed by 2019.

The staff should provide the Commission with a plan and schedule for this rulemaking for information within nine months of the date of this SRM.

cc: Chairman Burns
Commissioner Svinicki
Commissioner Ostendorff
Commissioner Baran
OGC
CFO
OCA
OPA
Office Directors, Regions, ACRS, ASLBP (via E-Mail)
PDR