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NRC Proposes FY 2017 Budget to Congress; Agency Continues to Achieve Efficiencies

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's proposed \$970.2 million Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 operations budget to regulate the nation's nuclear power plants and radioactive materials users is down nearly \$20 million from FY 2016's spending levels. This continues a steady decline in both spending and staffing. The budget is down eight percent since 2014. The proposed budget for the Office of the Inspector General is an additional \$12.1 million.

"This budget recognizes the changing environment in the nuclear industry and reflects the considerable steps taken by the NRC to become more efficient, while still meeting our obligation to protect public health and safety," said NRC Chairman Stephen G. Burns. He noted that the agency used a variety of cost-saving approaches to pare the budget back well below the previous year.

Since the NRC recovers approximately 90 percent of its budget from licensee fees, which are sent directly to the Treasury, the resulting net appropriation request is \$121 million.

The NRC's budget submission for operations was boosted by \$5 million for work to develop the regulatory infrastructure for advanced reactor technologies in support of the President's Mission Innovation program. The \$5 million is not included in the amount recouped by licensing fees. The FY 2017 operations budget funds 3,462 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, a decline of 90 FTE from the FY 2016 budget and 280 FTE since 2014. This year's decline is due to a number of initiatives to improve the efficiency of agency operations, including the centralization of corporate functions and merger of two program offices.

Before issuance of the FY 2017 budget, as part of agency initiatives to become more efficient and as a result of the 2016 appropriation, NRC was able to reduce spending by \$30.1 million. This will likely result in a reduction to the recovery of nuclear reactors and materials licensee fees.

The FY 2017 budget breakout includes \$757.4 million for nuclear reactor safety and \$212.8 million for nuclear materials and waste safety and will allow the agency to continue to uphold its important safety and security mission. The budget also includes resources to continue implementation of lessons-learned from the Fukushima nuclear accident, the review of applications for medical isotope production facilities, and the oversight of four new reactors that are under construction.

Project Aim, the NRC's transformation effort, will ensure the agency has the right resource levels and workforce staffing to conduct its future work. The goal is to improve the NRC's effectiveness, efficiency and agility. The FY 2017 budget incorporates some Project Aim recommendations and the Commission is considering a variety of other further potential efficiencies from the effort.

The amount requested for the Inspector General totals \$12.1 million. That independent office conducts audits and investigations to ensure the efficiency and integrity of NRC programs, and promote cost-effective management. The OIG's budget also includes funding to provide auditing and investigation services for the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

The budget briefing slides and the Congressional Budget Justification are available on the [NRC website](#). A limited number of hard copies of the report will be available from opa.resource@nrc.gov.