



**NRC**



# NRC An Independent Regulatory Agency

## Mission

*The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is an independent agency created by Congress. Its mission is to license and regulate the civilian use of radioactive materials in the United States to protect public health and safety, promote the common defense and security, and protect the environment.*

The NRC regulates commercial nuclear power plants; research, test, and training reactors; nuclear fuel cycle facilities; and radioactive materials used in medicine, academia, and industry. The agency also regulates the transport, storage, and disposal of radioactive materials and waste; most Federal agencies' use and possession of radioactive materials; and the export and import of radioactive materials. The NRC regulates industries within the United States and works with agencies around the world to enhance global nuclear safety and security. To fulfill its responsibilities, the NRC performs five principal regulatory functions, as seen in Figure 1: How We Regulate.

## Vision and Values

*A trusted, independent, transparent, and effective nuclear regulator*

To be successful, the NRC must not only excel in carrying out its mission but must do so in a manner that engenders the trust of the public and stakeholders. This vision is an outgrowth of the NRC operating in a manner consistent with its longstanding Principles of Good Regulation—*independence, openness, efficiency, clarity, and reliability*—and its organizational values.

These principles guide the agency. They affect how the NRC reaches decisions on safety, security, and the environment; how the NRC performs administrative tasks; and how its employees interact with each other as well as external stakeholders. By adhering to these principles and values, the NRC maintains its regulatory competence, conveys that competence to the stakeholders, and promotes trust in the agency. The agency puts these principles into practice with effective, realistic, and timely actions.

### NRC Organizational Values

**Integrity** in our working relationships, practices, and decisions

**Service** to the public and others who are affected by our work

**Openness** in communications and decisionmaking

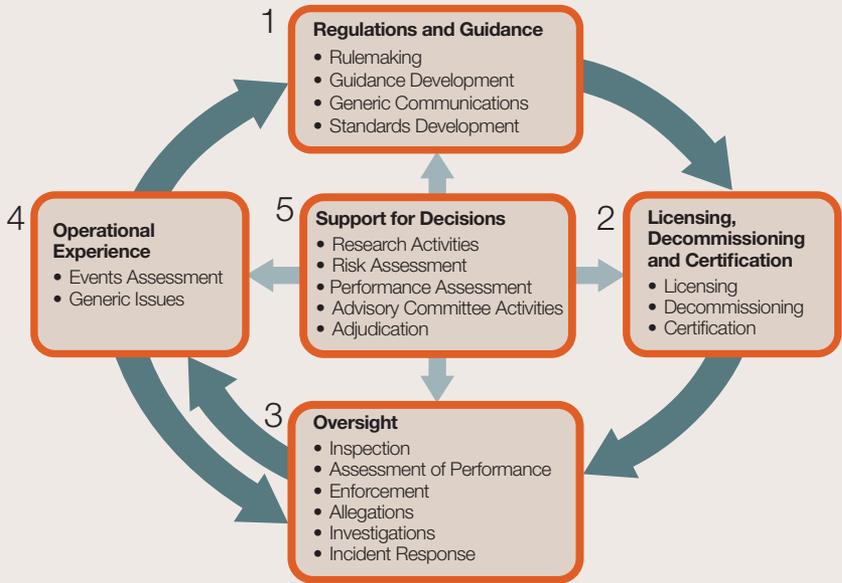
**Commitment** to public health and safety, security, and the environment

**Cooperation** in the planning, management, and performance of agency work

**Excellence** in our individual and collective actions

**Respect** for individuals' diversity, roles, beliefs, viewpoints, and work/life balance

**Figure 1. How We Regulate**



1. Developing regulations and guidance for applicants and licensees.
2. Licensing or certifying applicants to use nuclear materials, operate nuclear facilities, and decommission facilities.
3. Inspecting and assessing licensee operations and facilities to ensure licensees comply with NRC requirements, responding to incidents, investigating allegations of wrongdoing, and taking appropriate followup or enforcement actions when necessary.
4. Evaluating operational experience of licensed facilities and activities.
5. Conducting research, holding hearings, and obtaining independent reviews to support regulatory decisions.



*NRC staff members meet with stakeholders to discuss the agency's regulatory issues.*

## Strategic Goals

**Safety:** Ensure the safe use of radioactive materials.

**Security:** Ensure the secure use of radioactive materials.

## Statutory Authority

The Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 created the NRC from a portion of the former Atomic Energy Commission. The new agency was to independently oversee—but not promote—the commercial nuclear industry so the United States could benefit from the use of radioactive materials while also protecting people and the environment. The agency began operations on January 18, 1975. The NRC's regulations can be found in Title 10, "Energy," of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR). The principal statutory authorities that govern the NRC's work can be found on the NRC's Web site (see the Web Link Index for more information).

The NRC, its licensees (those licensed by the NRC to use radioactive materials), and the Agreement States (States that assume regulatory authority over certain nuclear materials) share responsibility for protecting public health and safety and the environment. Federal regulations and the NRC's regulatory program play a key role. Ultimately, however, the licensees bear the primary responsibility for safely handling and using radioactive materials.

## Major Activities

The NRC fulfills its responsibilities by:

- licensing the design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of commercial nuclear power plants and other nuclear facilities
- licensing the possession, use, processing, handling, exporting, and importing of nuclear materials
- licensing the siting, design, construction, operation, and closure of low-level radioactive waste (LLW) disposal sites in States under NRC jurisdiction
- certifying the design, construction, and operation of commercial transportation casks
- licensing the design, construction, and operation of spent fuel storage casks and interim storage facilities for spent fuel and high-level radioactive waste
- licensing nuclear reactor operators
- licensing uranium enrichment facilities

- conducting research to develop regulations and to anticipate potential reactor and other nuclear facility safety issues
- collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information about the safe operation of commercial nuclear power reactors and certain nonreactor activities
- issuing safety and security regulations, policies, goals, and orders that govern nuclear activities
- interacting with other Federal agencies, foreign governments, and international organizations on safety and security issues
- investigating nuclear incidents and allegations concerning any matter regulated by the NRC
- inspecting NRC licensees to ensure adequate performance of safety and security programs
- enforcing NRC regulations and the conditions of NRC licenses and imposing, when necessary, civil sanctions and penalties
- conducting public hearings on nuclear and radiological safety and security and on environmental concerns
- implementing international legal commitments made by the U.S. Government in treaties and conventions
- developing effective working relationships with State and Tribal governments
- maintaining an effective incident response program and overseeing required emergency response activities at NRC-licensed facilities
- implementing lessons learned from the March 2011 nuclear accident in Japan to enhance safety at U.S. commercial nuclear facilities
- involving the public in the regulatory process through meetings, conferences, and workshops; providing opportunities for commenting on proposed new regulations, petitions, guidance documents, and technical reports; providing ways to report safety concerns; and providing documents under the Freedom of Information Act and through the NRC's Web site
- engaging and informing the public through social media platforms and by providing interactive, high-value data sets (data in a form that allows members of the public to search, filter, or repackaging information)

*See the complete list of NRC's authorizing legislation in Appendix W.*

## Organizations and Functions

The NRC's Commission has five members nominated by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate for 5-year terms. The members' terms are staggered so one Commissioner's term expires on June 30 of each year. The President designates one member to serve as Chairman. The Chairman is the principal executive officer and spokesperson of the agency. No more than three Commissioners can belong to the same political party. The Commission as a whole formulates policies and regulations governing the safety and security of nuclear reactors and materials, issues orders to licensees, and adjudicates legal matters brought before it. The Executive Director for Operations carries out the policies and decisions of the Commission and directs the activities of the program and regional offices (see Figure 2: NRC Organizational Chart).

### Commissioner Term Expiration\*



*Stephen G. Burns*  
Chairman  
June 30, 2019



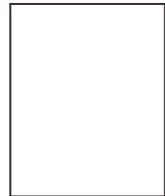
*Kristine L. Svinicki*  
June 30, 2017



*Jeff Baran*  
June 30, 2018



*Vacant*



*Vacant*

\* Commissioners listed by seniority. There are two positions vacant.

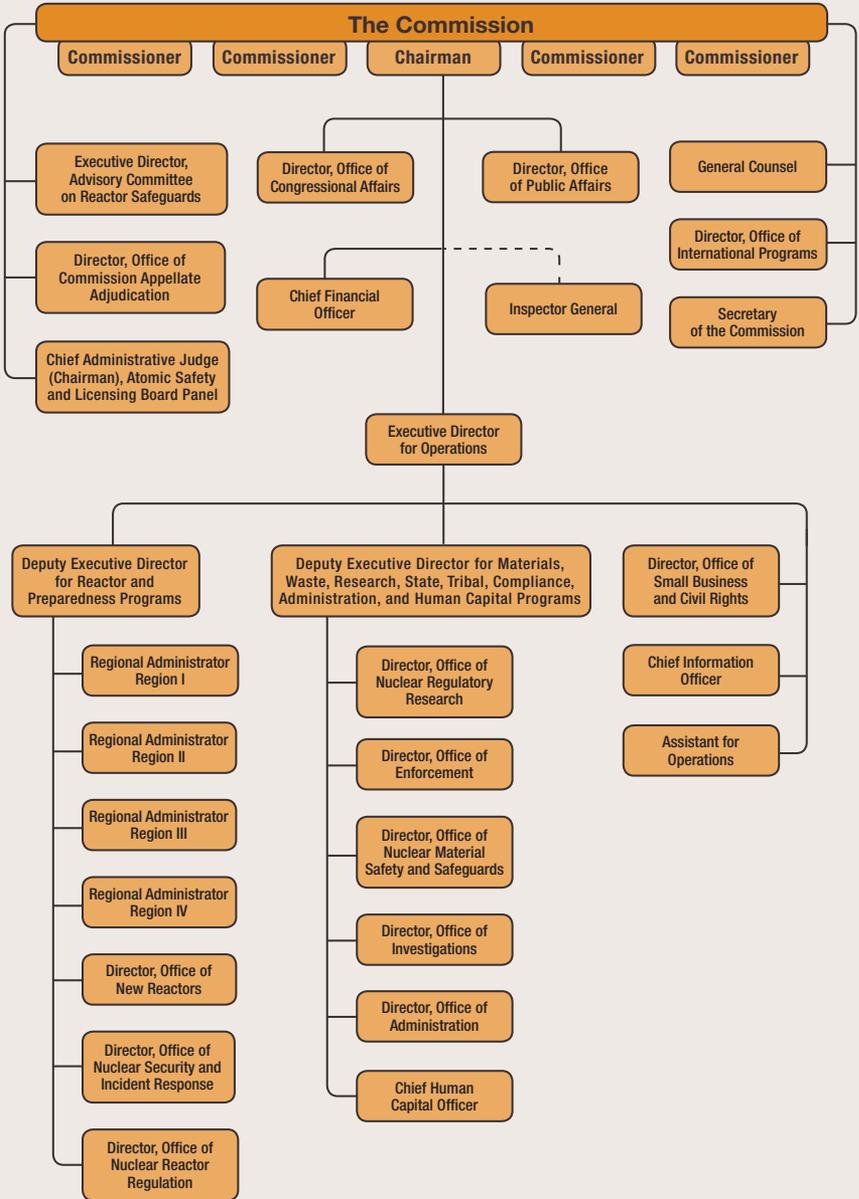
The NRC is headquartered in Rockville, MD, and has four regional offices. They are located in King of Prussia, PA; Atlanta, GA; Lisle, IL; and Arlington, TX. The major program offices within the NRC include:

The **Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation** handles all licensing and inspection activities for existing nuclear power reactors and research and test reactors.

The **Office of New Reactors** oversees the design, siting, licensing, and construction of new commercial nuclear power reactors.

The **Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research** provides independent expertise and information for making timely regulatory judgments, anticipating potentially significant safety problems, and resolving safety issues. It helps develop technical regulations and standards, and collects, analyzes, and disseminates information about the safety of commercial nuclear power plants and certain nuclear materials activities.

**Figure 2. NRC Organizational Chart**



Note: For the most recent information, go to NRC Organizational Chart at [www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization.html](http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/organization.html)

# NRC: AN INDEPENDENT REGULATORY AGENCY

The **Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards** regulates the production of commercial nuclear fuel; uranium-recovery activities; decommissioning of nuclear facilities; and the use of radioactive materials in medical, industrial, academic, and commercial applications. It regulates safe storage, transportation, and disposal of high- and low-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. The office also works with other Federal agencies, States, and Tribal and local governments on regulatory matters.

The **Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response** initiates and oversees implementation of agency security policy for nuclear facilities and users of radioactive material and coordinates with other Federal agencies and international organizations on security issues. This office also maintains the NRC's emergency preparedness and incident response programs.

The **Regional Offices** conduct inspections and investigations, take enforcement actions (in coordination with the Office of Enforcement), and maintain emergency response programs for nuclear reactors, fuel facilities, and materials licensees. In addition, the regions carry out licensing for certain materials licensees (see Figure 3: NRC Regions).



*The NRC headquarters complex is located in Rockville, MD.*

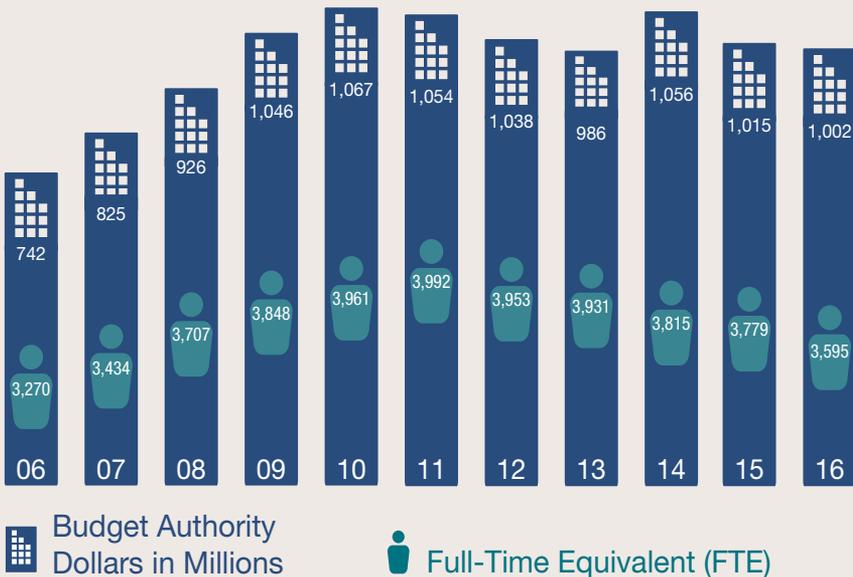


## Fiscal Year 2016 Budget

For fiscal year (FY) 2016 (October 1, 2015, through September 30, 2016), the NRC's budget is \$1,002.1 million. The NRC's FY 2016 full-time equivalents (FTE) are 3,595; this includes the Office of the Inspector General (see Figure 4: NRC Budget Authority, FYs 2006–2016). The Office of the Inspector General received its own appropriation of \$12.1 million. This amount is included in the total NRC budget.

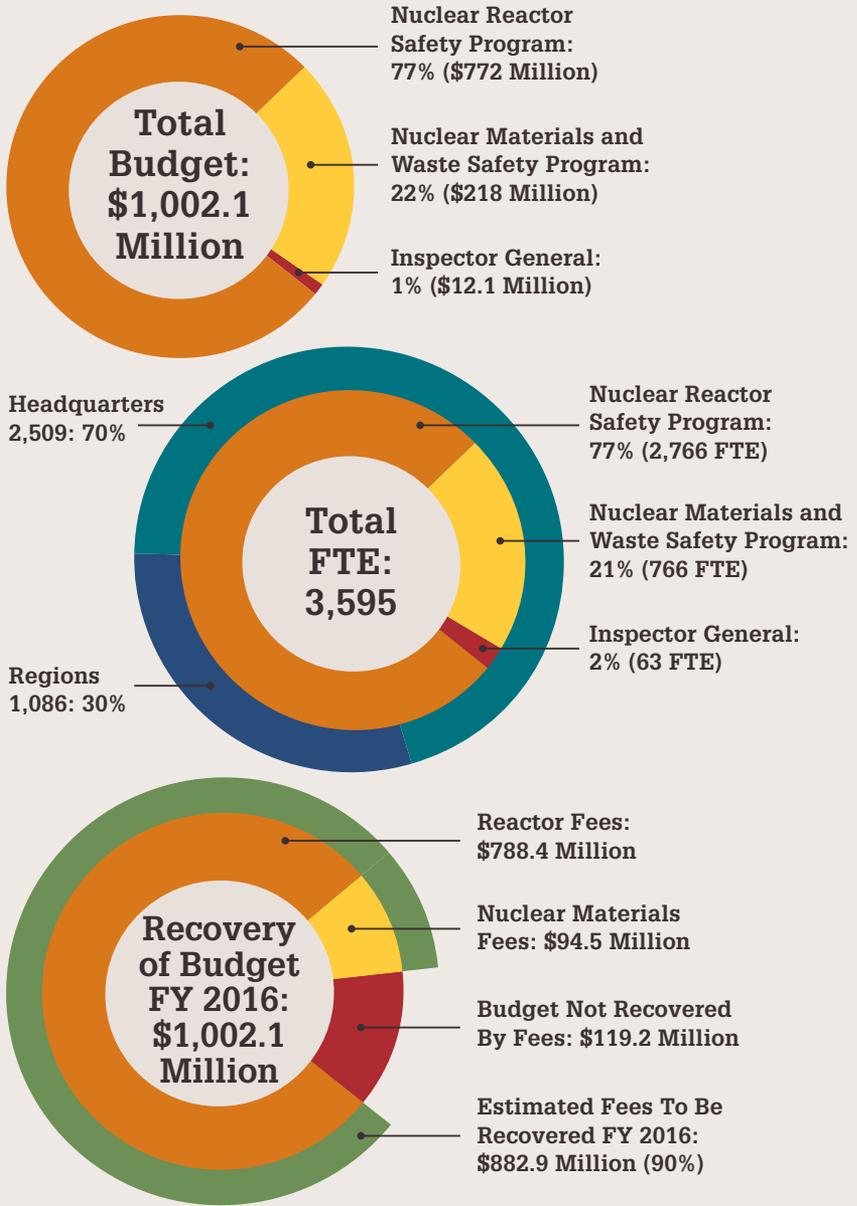
The breakdown of the budget is shown in Figure 5: NRC FY 2016 Distribution of Budget Authority; Recovery of NRC Budget. By law, the NRC must recover, through fees billed to licensees, approximately 90 percent of its budget authority, less the amounts appropriated from general funds for waste-incident-to-reprocessing activities and generic homeland security activities. The NRC collects fees each year by September 30 and transfers them to the U.S. Treasury. Estimated fees to be recovered in FY 2016 are \$882.9 million.

**Figure 4. NRC Budget Authority, FYs 2006–2016**



Note: Dollars are rounded to the nearest million.

**Figure 5. NRC FY 2016 Distribution of Budget Authority; Recovery of NRC Budget**



Note: The NRC incorporates corporate and administrative costs proportionately within programs. Numbers are rounded. Budget for FY 2016.