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DSI-5
(20)

Oregon

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

HEALTH DIVISION

November 14, 1996

Mr. John C. Hoyle
Secretary of the Commission
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington D.C. 20555-0001

ATTN: Chief of Docketing and Services Branch

This is in response to NRC's announcement No. 96-121 dated Friday, September 13, 1996 seeking comment on the Agency's strategic assessment of regulatory activities.

The enclosed document includes comments from the Oregon Health Division relating to the Commission's direction-setting issue (DSI's) papers. References to specific options refer to those in the September 16, 1996 draft the Commission distributed for comment.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these policy options the Commission is considering.

Sincerely,

Ray D. Paris, Manager
Radiation Protection Services

Enclosure

John A. Kitzhaber
Governor

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24-26 (Rev. 12-94)

Acknowledged by card 12/23/96 PMS

Oregon Health Division Comments
on
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Direction Setting Issue Papers (DSI's)

DSI 2: Oversight of the Department of Energy

NRC should initially take the position described in Option 4. However, they should seriously consider and move forward with option 1A for the long term.

DSI 4: NRC's Relationship with Agreement States

NRC should follow option 3 with one exception: NRC should return to the prior policy of fully funding the Agreement States Program and fund Agreement State training, travel, and limited technical assistance. NRC needs to more closely evaluate the national benefit of providing the training to ensure consistency and uniformity in licensing and compliance issues.
LLW issues should continue to be addressed by the states, with a research and assistance roll performed by NRC. LLW is a national issue, and such assistance should be cost-shared by the federal and state licensees through fees.

DSI 5: Low-Level Waste

NRC should follow option 4. Option 3 would be a viable alternative. The LLW program should not be transferred to EPA.

DSI 6: High-Level Waste and Spent Fuel

NRC should follow option 3 and be prepared to evaluate an independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) for waste from all over the country. NRC should also move to amend their rules to allow greater than Class C wastes in an ISFSI, both nationally and at-reactor.

DSI 7: Materials/Medical Oversight

NRC should follow a combination of option 2 and option 3. There is certainly justification to pursue decreased oversight of low-risk activities where appropriate. New low-risk methodologies are becoming more widely used and compensation for these exposure reducing techniques deserve less oversight.

DSI 9: Decommissioning - Non-Reactor Facilities

NRC should pursue options 6 and 7. It appears several tools are already in place in option 7 and would require few additional resources or legislative action.

DSI 10: Reactor Licensing for Future Applicants

NRC should follow option 3.

DSI 11: Operating Reactor Program Oversight

NRC should follow option 2.

DSI 12: Risk-Informed, Performance-Based Regulation

None of the options listed stand out as clear choices. There are aspects of each that need to be considered. NRC needs to work closely with the Agreement States and the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors in developing efficient and effective regulations. The parallel process of rule making agreed upon with the CRCPD is an excellent means to accomplish this.

DSI 13: Role of Industry

NRC should follow option 4.

DSI 14: Public Communication Initiatives

NRC should pursue a combination of option 2 and option 3. Early identification of public concerns is important but an increased emphasis on outreach to the public will certainly enhance public acceptance.
It would also be prudent for the NRC to evaluate their documents for readability. Commercial software is available to determine a "readability" and "fog" index. The readability index for the paragraph in "Option 1a" is about 20. This means it takes someone with 20 years of formal education to understand it. Most citizens do not have this level of education. To communicate to the public, one must write for the public.

DSI 20: International Activities

NRC should follow option 3.

DSI 21: Fees

NRC should follow option 2.

DSI 22: Research

NRC should pursue a combination of option 5 and option 6. It is important to have essential core research capabilities within NRC but university based resources should be a vital component in the research program activities.

DSI 23: Enhancing Regulatory Excellence

NRC should follow option 2.

DSI 24: Power Reactors

NRC should follow option 2. NRC Rules should allow for easier transport of reactor vessels and other large reactor components. They should not be subject to review as if they were transport casks used to ship discrete sources. Special precautions, speed limitations, and shipment preparations can assure safe transport. By forcing removal of internal structures from a reactor vessel prior to shipment, radiation dose is increased. The resulting contamination from the removal process will greatly complicate decommissioning also.