



PROJECT AIM STATUS UPDATE

October 24, 2017- January 05, 2018

In the staff requirements memorandum (SRM) for SECY-15-0015, "Project Aim 2020 Report and Recommendations," issued on June 8, 2015, the Commission directed the staff to provide periodic updates on the status of the implementation of the approved Project Aim 2020 recommendations. The 19 Project Aim tasks involve follow-on actions to implement recommendations that will continue to affect and shape the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) line organizations into the future. Below is a summary of the implementation activities for the period October 24, 2017, through January 5, 2018.

We would like to highlight the following progress related to Project Aim:

- On November 24, 2017, the staff provided notification of the formation of the Rulemaking Center of Expertise (RM COE), via a note to the Commissioners' Assistants. The RM COE was put into effect on October 29, 2017. Creation of this COE responds to Commission direction in SRM-SECY-15-0143, "Project AIM and Centers of Expertise," dated February 22, 2016 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management Systems (ADAMS) Accession No. ML16053A500). The staff will provide the Executive Director for Operations (EDO) a 1-year self-assessment of the RM COE by October 29, 2018.
- On December 11, 2017, the staff provided the 1-year self-assessment of the Technical Specifications Center of Expertise (TSCOPE) to the EDO, via a memorandum titled, "U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Technical Specifications Center of Expertise 1-Year Self-Assessment," (ADAMS Accession No. ML17328A671). This is the third self-assessment of a COE resulting from the implementation of Task 10, "Centers of Expertise." The staff also provided a note to the Commissioners' Assistants, dated, December 15, 2017 (ADAMS Accession No. ML17341A838), regarding the TSCOPE self-assessment.

The agency continues to institutionalize the actions related to Project Aim. Task 5, one of the 19 Project Aim tasks, involves full implementation of the 2016 integrated prioritization and re-baselining of 150 agency work activities to be shed, de-prioritized, or performed with fewer resources. The staff has completed 148 of the 150 approved activities related to the re-baselining activities in SECY-16-0009, "Recommendations Resulting from the Integrated Prioritization and Re-Baselining of Agency Activities" (ADAMS Accession No. ML16028A189). The two remaining activities continue to be delayed beyond the original target date. However, the full time equivalent (FTE) and contract dollar savings represented by these activities have been included in the agency budget, and work is proceeding by reprioritizing additional budgeted work. No activities were completed this quarter.

The two activities that are delayed beyond the original target date are:

- Activity 4, orderly closeout of Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI) and Monitored Retrievable Storage licensing requirements, continues to be delayed¹. The completion of a regulatory guide will close out this action. The Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards staff is continuing to coordinate with its contractor, Sandia National Laboratory (SNL), to resolve NRC staff comments on a report that SNL drafted as part of the technical basis, specifically on source term release fractions. The NRC expects to have a final report from SNL in March 2018, a paper to the Commission in October 2018, and the regulatory basis in December 2019.
- Activity 94, updating the guidance for the 10 CFR 2.206 process for petitions to clarify the evaluation criteria for when to hold public meetings on petitions and allow the Petition Review Board to make an initial decision to accept the petition without a petitioner presentation, when appropriate. Since the issuance of the original re-baselining plan, the NRC has decided to seek public comments on Management Directive (MD) 8.11, “Review Process for 10 CFR 2.206 Petitions.” A Commission meeting to consider the public’s input on the procedural guidance for the 10 CFR 2.206 process is scheduled for February 2018.

The staff continues to make progress on the longer-term efficiencies identified in SECY-16-0035, “Additional Re-Baselining Products,” dated March 18, 2016. This period did not have any longer-term efficiencies with targeted completion dates.

The staff would also like to highlight the following activity, which was not a part of the original 19 Project Aim tasks, but which demonstrates the staff’s continued commitment to effectiveness, efficiency, and agility.

- On May 10, 2016, the NRC staff published “Evaluation of Corporate Support Functions in the Regional Office—Results and Recommendations” (ADAMS Accession No. ML16131A064). The paper identified certain process efficiencies to yield savings through the standardization or centralization of specific support functions over time. By a memorandum dated July 12, 2016 (ADAMS Accession No. ML16189A004), the EDO created a task force to assess, standardize, and centralize NRC mission support functions. The task force was asked to conduct a functional assessment of support staff functions performed by the Division of Resource Management and Administration (DRMA) of each regional office, as well as the Program Management, Policy Development, and Analysis (PMDA) organizations. The task force identified and evaluated the following: opportunities to standardize functions and approaches across DRMA and PMDA organizations, and the relative effectiveness and efficiency of performing those functions locally or centrally. The recommendations of the task force were provided to the EDO in a report, “Standardization and Centralization of Mission Support Functions – An Implementation Plan,” dated December 29, 2016 (ADAMS Accession No. ML16364A163). The EDO approved all of the 21 recommendations and tasked the staff to implement each recommendation. Six of the 21 projects were completed in 2017. The staff continues to work through the recommendations and provides feedback to the Project Aim Steering Committee when slippage or new information arises that may require a change in direction.

¹ In 2015, the NRC staff recommended, and the Commission approved, a delay in the ISFSI rulemaking for up to 5 years as staff predicted that the technical basis will be completed by 2020.