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NRC to Hold Public Pre-Decisional Enforcement Conference with Holtec to Address Spent Fuel Storage Canister Design Issues

Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials will hold a pre-decisional enforcement conference Jan. 9 with representatives of Holtec International to discuss apparent violations of NRC regulations stemming from changes Holtec made to one of its spent nuclear fuel storage canister designs.

The conference will be held in the Commission Hearing Room at NRC Headquarters, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md., from 1-5 p.m., Eastern Time. The conference will be open to the public and will be [webcast](#).

The apparent violations stem from an incident last March, when workers at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station discovered a loose four-inch stainless steel pin at the bottom of a canister as it was being prepared to be loaded with spent fuel. The pin was part of a shim designed to support the fuel basket and allow airflow to the fuel assemblies within the canister. As such, the shim is considered essential to the function of the fuel basket.

An NRC inspection report issued Nov. 29 described two apparent violations of NRC's quality assurance regulations. The NRC determined Holtec, when it changed the shim to the pin design in 2016, failed to establish adequate design control measures for selecting and applying materials, parts, equipment and processes essential to the function of safety-related structures, systems and components. Holtec also failed to maintain written records of changes to its canister design, including an evaluation of why the design change could be implemented without applying to the NRC for an amendment to the canister's Certificate of Compliance.

The NRC offered Holtec a choice between the pre-decisional enforcement conference or third-party mediation. Holtec chose the conference, at which its officials will be able to present additional information for the NRC staff to consider in assessing the significance of the subject violations. No final action will be taken at the Jan. 9 conference.