



PROJECT AIM STATUS UPDATE

January 1 – March 31, 2019

In the June 8, 2015, staff requirements memorandum (SRM) for SECY-15-0015, “Project Aim 2020 Report and Recommendations,” the Commission directed Project Aim’s 19 tasks to address the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s (NRC) need to improve efficiency and agility, as well as to right-size the agency, while retaining employees with the appropriate skills to accomplish its mission and streamline processes.

The staff continues to implement several tasks related to Project Aim. The most notable accomplishments for the period of January through March 2019 were the completion of the final work activity from re-baselining and the completion of one mission support standardization and centralization task.

Task 5. Common Prioritization and Re-baselining

Task 5 involved the integrated prioritization and re-baselining of 150 agency work activities to be shed, de-prioritized, or performed with fewer resources. The main deliverable for this task was provided to the Commission in SECY-16-0009, “Recommendations Resulting from the Integrated Prioritization and Re-Baselining of Agency Activities.” The agency has now completed all 150 specific Re-baselining activities.

The last activity was Activity 94, which required the updating the guidance for the process in Title 10, *Code of Federal Regulation*, Section 2.206 (10 CFR 2.206), 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. On March 11, 2019, the NRC staff issued the revision to Management Directive 8.11, “Review Process for 10 CFR 2.206 Petitions,” that incorporated Commission feedback on ways to improve the 10 CFR 2.206 petition process.

Task 5 also involved providing the Commission with known changes in workload and longer-term efficiencies. This product was provided March 18, 2016, in SECY-16-0035, “Additional Re-Baselining Products.” The staff continues to make progress on the seven remaining longer-term efficiencies.

Task 14. Evaluate Consolidation of Regional Corporate Support Functions

In Task 14, the staff completed an evaluation of the support functions (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession Number ML16131A064) in the Division of Resource Management and Administration (DRMA) in each NRC region and identified process efficiencies that will yield savings through standardization or centralization of specific support functions over time. The deliverable completing this task was provided to the Commission offices by a Commissioners’ Assistants Note on June 6, 2016.

Though completed, the work on Project Aim Task 14 inspired a broader, follow-on effort to standardize and centralize mission support activities performed by DRMA and Program Management, Policy Development, and Analysis divisions in program offices and regions across the agency (ADAMS Accession Number ML17040A349). On May 11, 2017, the mission support standardization and centralization working group provided an agencywide implementation plan (ADAMS Accession Number ML17121A431) for 28 projects to centralize and standardize financial

management, human resource, information technology/information management, and administrative functions. During this period, the staff has closed one of the remaining eight mission support standardization and centralization tasks.

The NRC completed Project 20 for the migration of the Staffing Plan module in the agency's Budget Formulation System from the agency's internal environment to the Oracle Enterprise Project Management Cloud environment. Along with the migration, improvements to the staffing application have been made that will improve the user experience and increase effectiveness of the module for staffing plan tracking and monitoring. This included the development of reports comparing budgeted and actual values.

Task 15. Transitional Plan for the Merger of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation and Office of New Reactors

In Task 15, the Commission directed the staff to develop a plan to merge the Office of New Reactors (NRO) and the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) at the appropriate time. A working group developed a business case for a merger, which included a description of projected efficiencies and challenges, and plans for the staff to address those challenges. The assessment also included an evaluation of leading resource drivers and proposed timing for a merger. The Project Aim deliverable was provided in SECY-16-0075 on June 8, 2016. In SRM-SECY-16-0075 the Commission approved the merger of NRR and NRO and directed the staff to complete the consolidation of the two offices by September 30, 2020. Subsequently, in SRM-COMKLS-18-0003, "Fiscal Year 2020 Budget to the Commission," the staff was directed to phase-in the NRR/NRO merger with the goal of completing it by mid-fiscal year (FY) 2020. Early in 2019, it was decided to implement the merger in October 2019.

Implementation activities are ongoing. The NRR/NRO merger implementation team was formed in January 2019 and has completed a series of activities focused on implementing an organizational structure based on the needs of the agency, feedback from the staff, and flexibility to organize around future work. This included: conducting listening sessions with staff to gain insights on merging the organizations; developing combined high-level workload and staffing projections for operating reactor and new reactor work through FY 2021; creating an eight division organizational model; and, conducting targeted staff and management meetings, and three office open door meetings.

Pre-merger consolidations (PMCs) are tactical opportunities to consolidate staffing from NRR and NRO at the branch level, that readily match the necessary work with the onboard staff and/or supervision. PMCs also provide early opportunities to identify and combine best practices. In addition, PMCs provide a motivation to both cross-train staff on the regulatory processes and update procedures where appropriate, laying the foundation for enhanced agility and flexibility in future staffing decisions. PMCs for Instrumentation and Controls, Operator Licensing, and Human Factors Engineering were implemented in October 2018.

As overall workload has and is projected to continue to both change and decrease in NRO, management will continue to appropriately consolidate branches and divisions, to proactively manage staffing plans on an ongoing basis. One additional PMC is scheduled to occur in April 2019, which is the merger of the program management within both offices in anticipation of the increased workload in specific functional areas within those divisions due to the merger in 2019. These functional areas include the offices' financial management and budget execution activities, coordination in infrastructure space, and the offices' human capital activities. Additionally, NRR and NRO have worked with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) to centralize the information technology functions in OCIO.