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POLICY ISSUE

(NEGATIVE CONSENT)

August 15, 1990

SECY-90-287

For: The Commissioners
From: James M. Taylor
Executive Director for Operations
Subject: DISTINGUISHED ENGINEERS AND DISTINGUISHED SCIENTISTS
Purpose: To request Commission approval to implement a compensation plan designed to attract and retain a very limited number of highly esteemed and professionally recognized technical experts within NRC.

Discussion: The establishment of a pay plan for Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists will enable NRC to appropriately recognize and compensate highly esteemed technical experts without the necessity for them to enter supervisory positions or the Senior Executive Service. This can be achieved within existing legal authority and without obtaining any additional ceiling allocation from the Office of Personnel Management.

To implement this effort, I plan to identify program areas where such positions should be created. I will establish panels consisting of members of the NRC Executive Resources Board to review applications and recommend appointments and salaries to me. I will approve them and assign the title of Distinguished Engineer or Distinguished Scientist for (area of expertise). Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists would serve in nonsupervisory positions in line organizations. Merit selection principles would be observed for permanent appointments.

Contact:
Robert Loach, OP
492-8275

NOTE: TO BE MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WHEN THE FINAL SRM IS MADE AVAILABLE

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Salaries for Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists will be based on NRC's authority to pay scientific and technical employees up to the maximum payable for GS-18 in the competitive service. Minimum salary would be the GS-16 rate. Currently, these rates range from \$69,451 to \$78,200.

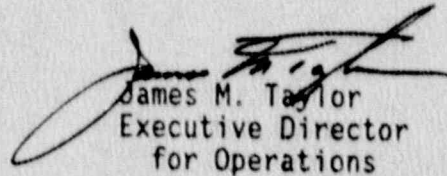
I expect that the number of individuals who will serve as Distinguished Engineers or Distinguished Scientists at any one time will be very limited, with fewer than five in the initial group designated.

Recommendation:

That the NRC Office of Personnel develop and issue an NRC Manual Chapter to implement a pay plan and procedures for appointing Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists as described above. The staff intends to circulate a draft chapter within 10 working days of the date of this paper unless otherwise instructed by the Commission.

Coordination:

This paper has been coordinated with the Office of the General Counsel and that office has no legal objection.


James M. Taylor
Executive Director
for Operations

Enclosure:

Draft NRC Manual Chapter 41XX:
Distinguished Engineers and
Distinguished Scientists

SECY NOTE: In the absence of instructions to the contrary, SECY will notify the staff on Wednesday, August 29, 1990, that the Commission, by negative consent, assents to the action proposed in this paper.

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(1-76)

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
NRC MANUAL
TRANSMITTAL NOTICE

CHAPTER 41XX NRC DISTINGUISHED ENGINEERS AND
DISTINGUISHED SCIENTISTS

SUPERSEDED:

	Number	Date
Chapter	_____	_____
Page	_____	_____
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Appendix	_____	_____

TRANSMITTED:

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TN	4100-	_____
Chapter	41XX	_____
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REMARKS:

This chapter establishes a pay plan and selection process for appointing NRC Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists.

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

NRC MANUAL

Volume: 4000 Personnel
Part: 4100 Federal

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CHAPTER 41XX NRC DISTINGUISHED ENGINEERS AND DISTINGUISHED SCIENTISTS

41XX-01 PURPOSE

This directive defines objectives, responsibilities, requirements, and procedures for using the excepted service authority of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to recruit and retain Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists in the NRC. Appointment as an NRC Distinguished Engineer or Distinguished Scientist recognizes individual contributors with highly specialized skills at the agency's highest echelon of technical expertise, who are capable of making exceptional contributions to the technical mission of the agency.

41XX-02 POLICY OBJECTIVES

021 To ensure the technical proficiency, expertise, and in-house analytical auditing capabilities of the NRC staff in areas such as reactor physics, thermal-hydraulic analyses, material sciences, structural loading, health physics, advanced plant control techniques, etc.

022 To attract and retain highly esteemed engineers and scientists capable of sustaining the agency's level of technical expertise in specialty areas at the highest levels possible and of making exceptional contributions to the accomplishment of the agency's health and safety mission.

41XX-03 DELEGATED AUTHORITIES AND MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

031 Executive Director for Operations (EDO): approves the establishment of a position and the appointment and compensation of an individual as a Distinguished Engineer/Distinguished Scientist and designates his/her title as "Distinguished Engineer/Distinguished Scientist for (area of expertise)."

032 Executive Resources Board (ERB) Panels for Distinguished Engineer/Distinguished Scientist: appointed by the Chairman of the ERB to provide recommendations to the EDO on establishing Distinguished Engineer/Distinguished Scientist positions; to review applications and recommend candidates to the EDO; and to recommend compensation to the EDO for Distinguished Engineers/Distinguished Scientists.

Approved:

DRAFT

NRC-41XX

DISTINGUISHED ENGINEERS AND DISTINGUISHED SCIENTISTS

033 Director, Office of Personnel: provides advice and assistance in establishing positions for, recruiting, and appointing Distinguished Engineers/Distinguished Scientists.

41XX-04 APPOINTMENTS

Appointment as a Distinguished Engineer/Distinguished Scientist may be permanent or for a limited period of time. Permanent appointments will be made in accordance with merit selection principles.

41XX-05 CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Criteria for selection and appointment as Distinguished Engineer/Distinguished Scientist will include nationally recognized expertise in an engineering or scientific specialty integral to the NRC mission. Candidates will be expected to have a record of accomplishment in their fields indicating the practical application of their knowledge to developments in nuclear technology.

41XX-06 ASSIGNMENTS

061 Distinguished Engineers/Distinguished Scientists will be assigned to line organization positions for the purpose of accomplishing scientific or technical work that directly furthers the technical mission of the agency. They will not hold supervisory or staff positions such as Technical Assistant or Special Assistant.

062 Employees serving as Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists should possess expert knowledge in their specialty area and skills sufficient to be able to effectively build a technical consensus among NRC staff specialists and with other experts from government, academia, the private sector, and the international community. In their specific specialty areas, these employees provide the technical leadership required to support NRC's regulatory mission. They may also advise on the technical qualifications of others.

41XX-07 COMPENSATION

071 Distinguished Engineers/Distinguished Scientists will be compensated in accordance with the agency's statutory authority for scientific and technical salaries. Pay for Distinguished Engineers/Distinguished Scientists will be within a range with its minimum rate the lowest salary for grade 16 in the General Schedule and its maximum the rate payable for General Schedule grade 18. Initial rates of pay will be recommended by an ERB Panel on the basis of the nature of the assignment and the qualifications and previous salary history of the recommended appointee. Salaries will be approved by the EDO.

Approved:

DRAFT

NRC-41XX

DISTINGUISHED ENGINEERS AND DISTINGUISHED SCIENTISTS

072 Office Directors may propose adjustments to the salaries of Distinguished Engineers and Distinguished Scientists annually on the basis of demonstrated performance. Adjustments to salaries will be approved by the EDO.

41XX-07 REFERENCES

- Section 161.d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (Public Law 83-703)
- NRC Appendix 4130-B, Evaluation of GG-16-18 and S&T (SR) positions
- NRC Appendix 4130-C, Pay Administration

Approved: