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**POLICY ISSUE**

(Information)

SECY-90-412

December 19, 1990

For: The Commissioners  
From: James M. Taylor  
 Executive Director for Operations  
Subject: FEDERAL FIELD EXERCISE 3

Purpose: To inform the Commission of the status of staff preparations for a full Federal demonstration of the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP) at an NRC-licensed facility.

Background: Several Federal agencies having expertise in radiological materials are participants in a plan to coordinate the Federal response to a major radiological emergency. The plan, called the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan or FRERP, was published in the Federal Register on November 8, 1985 (FR/Vol. 50, No. 217, pp. 46542-46570).

The Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan is to be used by Federal agencies in peacetime radiological emergencies. It primarily concerns the offsite Federal response in support of State and local governments with jurisdiction for the emergency. The FRERP: (1) provides the Federal government's concept of operations based on specific authorities for responding to radiological emergencies; (2) outlines Federal policies and planning assumptions that underlie this concept of operations and on which Federal agency response plans (in addition to their agency-specific policies) were based; and (3) specifies authorities and responsibilities of each Federal agency that may have a significant role in such emergencies.

The Federal Register notice stated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will periodically exercise the FRERP in coordination with the Subcommittee on Federal Response and the Subcommittee on Training and Exercises of the Federal Radiological Preparedness Coordinating Committee. The results of such exercises will be used to update the FRERP and individual agency offsite response plans and procedures as necessary.

NOTE: TO BE MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE  
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The FRERP covers any peacetime radiological emergency occurring within the United States, its territories, possessions, and territorial waters that could require a significant response by several Federal agencies. Specifically, emergencies occurring at fixed nuclear facilities or during the transportation of radioactive materials, including nuclear weapons, may fall within the scope of the FRERP regardless of whether the facility or radioactive materials are publicly or privately owned, Federally regulated, or regulated by an Agreement State.

Discussion:

The FRERP has been demonstrated twice before in Federal Field Exercises (FFE's), in 1984 at the St. Lucie plant and in 1987 at the Zion plant. FEMA and NRC staff have coordinated a date of early 1993 for the next Federal Field Exercise, FFE-3. NRC's preference for the site for FFE-3 was that it be located in NRC Region I. The two previous FFEs provided experience to NRC Regions II and III and Region I would be the logical choice to provide, among other things, this experience to the greatest number of NRC personnel. It was necessary that the facility be a volunteer and that the affected State be a willing participant as well.

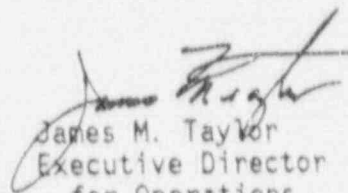
NRC and FEMA began discussions in July 1990 to identify an appropriate site. Nuclear Utilities Management and Resources Council (NUMARC) was requested to conduct a survey of possible utilities to: (1) identify anticipated disadvantages to the utility if selected as the site; (2) obtain suggestions on how to avoid the disadvantages; (3) obtain comments on proposed conditions and objectives of the exercise, and (4) solicit utilities that would be interested in further discussions. As a result of the survey, representatives of two potential host utilities met in Philadelphia on November 29, 1990, with management and staff from AEOD, NRC Region I, FEMA Headquarters, FEMA Region III, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Based on the ability to rearrange currently scheduled exercises with the least amount of disruption, it was determined that Pennsylvania Power and Light Company's Susquehanna Steam Electric Station located in Berwick, Pennsylvania would be the best site to host FFE-3. An additional advantage is that the utility has excellent relations with the local communities. The date is expected to be February or March 1993, subject to official acceptance by all the parties that the master exercise schedule can be adjusted.

The NRC has sent a letter to Pennsylvania Power and Light Company inviting them to host the Federal government's demonstration of a radiological emergency response. FEMA is sending a similar letter to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Commissioners

- 3 -

Future Actions: After the official acceptance of the location and date by the major participants, representatives from these organizations will meet to develop the FFE-3 planning organization. This meeting is expected to take place in mid to late January 1991.

  
James M. Taylor  
Executive Director  
for Operations

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