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Three Mile Island Recovery Operations

The NRC TMI Recovery Operations Office (previously known as the TMI Unit 2 NRR Support Team/IE Resident Office, Task Force, etc.), evolved out of the NRC response to the TMI-Unit 2 accident which occurred on March 28, 1979.

The team began to form with the arrival of the Office of Inspection and Enforcement Region I inspectors shortly after the accident, and continued to expand with the arrival of the first contingent of NRR personnel on March 29, and additional inspectors from all five regional offices. By the end of the first week it had grown to approximately 80 personnel, including the Director of NRR, and the I&E Region I Office, Director. A Public Affairs Office was also established in Middletown and staffed on a 24 hour per day basis to handle the flow of information and act as an interface with the public and the media.

The contingent was originally housed in a group of trailers (Trailer City) adjacent to the Metropolitan Edison Observation Center which is across the river, east of the plant, but eventually moved to its present location on Three Mile Island in late April.

The team was organized in support of a 24 hour per day operation and has overseen all activities conducted at the plant including the initial recovery from the accident, involvement in offsite and onsite environmental monitoring, stabilization of the reactor to a cold shutdown condition, and the design and installation of the many new systems needed to support the short term and long term recovery operations.

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The team is comprised of personnel from the Office's of Nuclear Reactor Regulation and Inspection and Enforcement (I&E). The NRR's role is primarily one of overseeing the licensing activities including review of procedures and performance of safety evaluations. I&E's role includes the monitoring of the licensee's ongoing activities in the areas of recovery operations, health physics, and construction activities to insure compliance with NRC regulations, orders and procedural requirements.

In addition to the above effort, the office became the focal point for all NRC activities and related administrative functions including the coordination of visits by the NRC Commissioners, congressmen, government officials, and various foreign dignitaries. The office also arranged for security access, and health physics indoctrination for the large numbers of NRC personnel rotating in and out of the activity.

As activities normalized the staff core has been reduced and it is presently anticipated that the permanent staff, including administration, will be twenty-four people (fourteen on site and seven in Bethesda). SecAttachments. The staff will be supplemented, as necessary, by the Office of NRR and the I&E regional offices. It is anticipated that 24 hour coverage will continue for the forseeable future. Responsibilities will include both Unit 2 recovery operations and Unit 1 restart activities.

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