



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 28, 2020

MEMORANDUM TO: Brian Holian, Director, Office of Nuclear Security  
and Incident Response  
David C. Lew, Regional Administrator, RI  
Laura A. Dudes, Regional Administrator, RII  
Jack Giessner, Regional Administrator, RIII  
Scott A. Morris, Regional Administrator, RIV

FROM: Ho K. Nieh, Director  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: INSPECTION GUIDANCE DURING TRANSITION FROM  
COVID-19 MANDATORY TELEWORK

This purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance for the regional offices to increase the level of Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) inspection activities as COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease across the country. This memorandum supplements the April 6, 2020, memorandum, "Updated Implementation of Resident Inspector Site Coverage During COVID-19" (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML20097E538) issued by the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation's (NRR) Division of Reactor Oversight (DRO).

This guidance is intended to balance the importance of protecting the health and safety of our inspectors and site personnel along with the need to conduct effective oversight that supports NRC's critical safety mission. The considerations listed in the April 6 memorandum still apply and should be viewed as guiding principles for regional decisions to resume the NRC's on-site inspection by residents and regional inspectors. For your convenience, the considerations for determining whether to increase or decrease on-site inspection have been updated and provided here in this memo:

- Specific health and safety circumstances of individual inspectors and their families, and availability of other inspectors as appropriate;
- Plant risk configuration, including but not limited to, the availability of safety-related systems, outage activities, planned or emergent maintenance activities;
- The availability, connectivity and usefulness of remote technologies for inspectors to provide effective oversight of safety and security activities, including plant information (e.g., meetings, corrective action program, or other data);
- On-site COVID-19 conditions and trends; and
- Local COVID-19 conditions around the site and the community where the inspectors reside, including directions from local authorities.

CONTACT: Philip J. McKenna, NRR/DRO  
301-415-0037

This memorandum establishes the goal for the calendar year (CY) 2020 ROP to be completed with at least the minimum inspection samples for the baseline inspection program for each site. The enclosure provides detailed guidance for specific ROP program elements in CY 2020. Notwithstanding this stated goal, NRR is mindful that because of this unprecedented public health emergency, ROP completion and some performance metrics may not be met for CY 2020. The regions should consider the risks to our inspectors' health and safety – and that of our licensees' employees – when making decisions about inspection completion. The regions should use the normal processes described in Inspection Manual Chapter (IMC) 2515 to document ROP and program metric completion.

The regions, NRR, and the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR) are encouraged to begin scheduling and implementing team and individual inspections. For team inspections, the dates should be planned and coordinated with the licensee.

Lastly, the regions are encouraged to leverage telework technology where such technologies can be shown to effectively accomplish the objectives of the NRC's inspection procedures and/or effectively minimize the further spread of COVID-19 during administrative aspects of the ROP (e.g., preparation and documentation, entrance and exit meetings, etc.).

NRR will continue to assess this guidance and update it as needed.

Enclosure:  
CY 2020 ROP Completion Guidance

SUBJECT: INSPECTION GUIDANCE DURING TRANSITION FROM COVID-19  
MANDATORY TELEWORK DATED MAY 28, 2020

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**ADAMS Accession No. ML20141L766**

**Via e-mail**

**NRR-106**

OFFICE	DRO/IRSB/BC*	DRO/DD (A)*	DRO/D*	NRR/D*
NAME	PMcKenna	THipschman	CMiller	HNieh
DATE	5/21/2020	5/28/2020	5/28/2020	5/28/2020

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# CY2020 ROP COMPLETION GUIDANCE

May 28, 2020

ROP Program	Implementation Guidance	Comments
<u>Baseline Sample Completion (Metric I-1)</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App A, page 1):	Inspect to at least minimum samples. (Nominal samples are acceptable if time permits and adequate samples are available)	Evaluate results of sample completion periodically. (See Note 1)
<u>Team Inspections on a 3 Year and 2 Year Cycle</u>	Determine if portions of or entire procedure can be completed remotely. Reschedule portions requiring onsite activities or reschedule entire inspection to be to be completed on-site within the cycle.	Review periodically to gather data if inspection cycle can be met when inspection is rescheduled. (See Note 6)
<u>Emergency Preparedness Inspections Biennial Graded Exercise &amp; Program Inspections</u>	Rescheduled to be completed within the cycle.	If graded exercises are rescheduled to the next calendar year, the biennial program inspection should be pulled into this calendar year to ensure inspection oversight is provided in CY2020.
<u>Force-on-Force Inspections</u>	Efforts being made to reschedule and complete within the cycle. However, continued COVID restrictions may necessitate further delays.	Performing FOF inspections in a graded approach: re-initiating modified "A" week activities in July and tentatively planning "B" week activities to resume in August. Assessing site-specific conditions for licensees 6-8 weeks prior to planned inspections to make decisions.
<u>Security Baseline Inspection Program:</u>	Rescheduled to be completed within the cycle.	Staff is coordinating with regions to prioritize inspections when on-site travel restrictions are lifted. Priority should be given to FoF and annual samples. For biennial and triennial IPs review periodically to gather data if inspection cycle can be met when inspections are rescheduled.
<u>Temporary Instructions</u>	Extend due date as required.	None
<u>Cyber Security Full Implementation Inspections</u>	Rescheduled to be completed within the cycle.	All inspections previously scheduled to occur through June are being rescheduled to later in CY2020 or early CY 2021.
<u>Radiation Safety Inspections</u> Reference (IPs 71124.01 thru 08):	Rescheduled to be completed within the cycle. (See Note 3)	On-site portion of inspections will be deferred until site access is restored.
<u>Vogtle 3&amp;4</u>	TBD	ITAAC inspections in the transition plan.

<u>Vendor Inspection Program</u>	A revised FY2020 inspection schedule has been planned.	Goal of conducting 20 inspections per FY could be in jeopardy.
<u>Reactive Inspections (Metric E-2)</u> Reference (IMC 0307 App A, page 8)	No effect on implementation.	Reactive inspections can be performed. Evaluate on a case by case basis.
<u>Completion of Supplemental Inspections (Metric E-1)</u> Reference (IMC 0307 App A, page 8)	Evaluate on a case by case basis.	With current status of the Action Matrix, very few supplemental inspections planned.
<u>Deep backshift inspections hours</u> Reference (IMC 2515, page 16)	No effect on implementation.	IMC 2515 requirement is 50 hours per site.
<u>ROP Performance Indicators</u> Reference (IMC 0608)	ERO participation PI possibly affected. FAQ 20-02 approved to address impacts.	Revisit FAQ to ensure existing extension date (12/31/2020) remains sufficient.
<u>Inspector Objectivity Reviews by Supervisors (Metric I-4).</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App A, page 3)	Perform as reasonably achievable.	Review progress but do not hold regions accountable for metric in CY2020.
<u>Senior Management on Site Visits</u> Reference (IMC 0102, pages 7-8)	Perform as reasonably achievable.	Prioritize visits based on oversight needs.
<u>ROP Annual Audit at Region IV</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App C draft)	No effect on implementation.	Perform entire audit remotely if in-person audit cannot reasonably be scheduled.
<u>Permanent Site Staffing (Metric I-6)</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App A, page 4)	No expected effect on implementation.	Each site should be evaluated on a case by case basis.
<u>Public Engagement Annual Assessment Meetings (Metric O-3)</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App A, page 6)	No effect on implementation.	Regions can perform virtual public meetings or other public engagement activities per IMC 0305.
<u>SDP detailed risk evaluations requiring site visits and associated delays – 255-day SDP</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App A, page 9)	No effect on implementation.	If exceeded explain in 2020 Self-Assessment.
<u>ADR/Reg Conferences/PEC delays</u>	No effect on implementation.	All activities could be performed virtually.
<u>Initial Inspector Qualification</u> Reference (IMC 1245, page 5)	No effect on implementation.	Inspector supervisors are already managing their qualification programs.
<u>Inspector Requalification (Metric I-5)</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App A, page 3)	No effect on implementation.	IMC 1245 already covers the deviation process.
<u>Resident Inspector Objectivity Visits to Other Sites (Metric I-3)</u> Reference (IMC 0307, App A, page 2)	SRI/RIs can still perform if reasonably achievable.	Review progress but do not hold regions accountable for metric in CY2020.
<u>2020 ROP self-assessment</u> Reference (IMC 0307)	No effect on implementation.	None.
<u>Operator Licensing</u> Reference (NUREG 1021)	Various effects on implementation. (See Note 2)	“Conducting Initial Operator License Examinations during COVID-19” guidance has been given to the Regions. (See Note 7)

## Notes on Potential Problem Areas in completing the CY2020 ROP:

1. IP 71111.20, "REFUELING AND OTHER OUTAGE ACTIVITIES" has 18 high level requirements to complete the IP. Some high-level requirements are very specific (i.e. "**If containment is opened, conduct a walkdown of containment just before closure**"). IMC 2515 states that "the inspector is to perform the inspection requirements most appropriate ... to the activity being inspected in order to declare an activity (sample) as being satisfactorily completed." Inspectors that do not complete a high-level requirement when it is available to be completed will need to document the IP as partially completed. For IP 71111.20, there is no means to go back and complete the missed requirement.
2. IP 71111.11B, "LICENSED OPERATOR REQUALIFICATION PROGRAM" is performed by the DRS operating license examiners. Sites perform simulator requalification examinations every year, and the requalification inspection is performed on a two-year cycle. Regional inspections of simulator exams at some sites are currently in their second year and DRS inspectors may not be able to travel to the site to inspect this portion of 71111.11B (i.e. "**Observe the administration of simulator scenarios and JPMs during the conduct of an annual requalification operating test required by 10 CFR 55.59(a)(2).**"). Sites usually perform these over a six-week period to hit every operating crew. Regions may not be able to inspect this part of 71111.11B at some sites. This would also make this IP partially complete with no means to go back and complete it during the 2-year inspection cycle.
3. IP71124.01, "RADIOLOGICAL HAZARD ASSESSMENT AND EXPOSURE CONTROLS," is performed by regional inspectors annually. The IP states: "Inspections should be performed during a refueling outage (RFO) or when radiologically significant work is being performed. When appropriately risk-informed samples are not available for inspection follow completion guidance of IMC 0306 section 06.08.f.3" (Note: Not highlighted in the procedure). The problem is for sites that have completed refueling outages this year and this sample was not completed on site. DRA is evaluating if the IP can be completed when the regional RP inspectors eventually go back on site this year (even though the RFO has been completed).
4. IPs 71114.01, "EXERCISE EVALUATION," and 71114.07, "HOSTILE ACTION EVENT" could be a challenge for regional EP inspectors to complete if too many EP exercises are postponed. IP 71114.06, "DRILL EVALUATION," can be completed by the resident inspector when licensees resume EP drills. NSIR will closely coordinate these evaluations for the remainder of the year.

## Other Notes:

5. IMC 0306, "PLANNING, SCHEDULING, TRACKING, AND REPORTING OF THE REACTOR OVERSIGHT PROCESS (ROP)," section 06.08 gives guidance on Inspection Procedure Completion Status. This guidance discusses guidance for marking samples as Complete, Complete - by Reference, Complete – minimum sample not available, Complete – opportunity to apply full procedure not available, and Complete – in previous year(s).
6. For inspections conducted on a 2, 3, or other year cycle, it is anticipated that for the inspections being scheduled during the earlier parts of the cycle, the inspection will likely be able to be accomplished on time, given licensee and NRC staff availability. If the inspection to be scheduled is in the latter part of the cycle, availability of licensee staff to be able to support inspections and other onsite activities (INPO and other utility onsite

visit activities, Operator Licensing Exams, etc.) and availability of NRC inspection resources may challenge the ability to complete the inspection on time. In those cases, the considerations in the cover memo to this attachment should be used to determine the priority for scheduling the inspection.

7. "Conducting Initial Operator License Examinations during COVID-19" guidance has been provided to the regions to support continuance of Operator Licensing (OL) exams, which play a mission critical part in ensuring that sufficient licensed operators are available to support safe operations. A copy of the guidance memo is available to NRC staff on the NRR/DRO/IRIB "Pandemic Inspection Guidance and Resources" SharePoint site.