



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

JAN 26 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NRR Employees

FROM: Hugh L. Thompson, Jr., Acting Director
Planning & Program Analysis Staff
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: NRR OFFICE LETTER NO. 4, REVISION 1 - HANDLING OF RESPONSES
TO PRIORITY PRINCIPAL CORRESPONDENCE

The following actions will be taken within NRR to comply with the EDO direction (see enclosed memorandum from William J. Dircks, dated December 12, 1980) for handling of responses to green ticket items whose control form has "PRIORITY" or "PRIORITY MAIL" noted under special instructions. The guidance is intended to raise the priority given to this critical mail and to assure timely responses to the correspondence. This revision supercedes and replaces NRR Office Letter No. 4, dated January 30, 1976.

Unless approved by the EDO's office, a response to priority principal correspondence will be completed by the established deadline date (usually ten working days after assignment by EDO). If a final response cannot be completed in that time frame for good cause (e.g., all of the required information will not be available until a later date), an interim or partial response, with a reasonable explanation and a firm projected date for completion, will be acceptable. However, the interim response approach should not be used as an escape clause. When the interim response approach is required, the item will remain in open status and will continue to be followed as part of the priority principal correspondence control.

Each priority principal correspondence item received by NRR will be screened by PPAS to determine responsibility for the reply. Those items assigned outside of PPAS will be given to the Division Correspondence Coordinator immediately after being logged in.

In order to meet the schedules, all priority mail must be in the hands of the person responsible for preparing the answer within one working day of receipt by the Division Coordinator; responses should be prepared at the AD level or above wherever possible. For those cases where the reply will require a level of detail which can only be provided by persons below the AD, the required people will be assigned to work directly for the responsible AD or Division Director.

Occasionally, there will be a need to transfer responsibility for a piece of priority mail. Requests for transfer should be made to PPAS within one working day of receipt since such a transfer does not usually relieve the deadline date. If approved, the transfer will be made by PPAS on that date.

The following actions have been or should be taken to assist in meeting the scheduled deadlines for priority principal correspondence.

- (1) Assignments have been made within PPAS to follow status of priority mail assigned to NRR divisions as noted below.

DOE & TMIPO	-	Hal Berkson	(x28970)
DST, DHFS & DSI	-	Jerry Carter	(x29519)
DOL	-	Manny Licitra	(x28968)

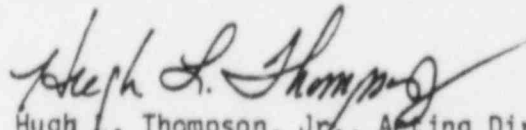
These PPAS members are available to help the individual assigned to respond to the request, but they are not responsible for preparing the reply. When necessary, the PPAS members can obtain early Office-level guidance at the initial drafting stage to respond to questions that involve policy matters.

- (2) As soon as the assignment is received, the responsible person should contact the appropriate PPAS member to establish the working interface. A draft of the response is to be provided to the PPAS contact within five working days of the assignment to the Division (for the normal ten working day suspense). The PPAS member is then responsible for obtaining any required Office-level guidance or input and providing the feedback to the originator within one working day.
- (3) All responses, starting with the first draft, should be typed on word processing equipment (e.g., Vydec) and should receive sufficient priority in both the use of the equipment and the typist. Conflicts with other priority work should be resolved at the Division Director level or above if necessary.
- (4) Limit the number of concurrences on the response to no more than five. OELD concurrence should be sought only when required by the nature of the response. Division Directors will determine which items need legal review and will establish guidelines on concurrences within their division.
- (5) Limit the time for concurrence at each level within NRR to no more than one working day. If concurrence cannot be obtained within that time frame at any level due to unavailability of the person involved, the package should automatically be taken to the next person for concurrence.
- (6) Where necessary to ensure a timely completion of the response, copies of the proposed response should be routed for simultaneous, rather than serial, review and concurrence.

- (7) Completed response packages brought to the NRR mail room for Office-level signature or concurrence must include the appropriate number of copies for distribution. For those responses which are prepared for signature above the Office-level, the completed package should be brought to the NRR mail room at least one full day before the EDO target date.
- (8) Any priority mail item that can be resolved by a phone call should be handled in that manner. The responsible person should then describe on the ticket the action taken and return it to the NRR mail room in lieu of a responding memo or letter.
- (9) Each week, PPAS will provide a current listing of all pending priority items to each Division Director, normally at the NRR staff meeting.

NRR is committed to making every effort to ensure that priority principal correspondence is handled in a timely manner. The priority status for such correspondence, which usually includes direct Congressional inquiries and requests from the Commission, is established by the EDO. However, in certain instances, NRR may place additional items in the category to be handled as priority mail (e.g., other green ticket items and EDO requests which are not completed within two weeks of the originally scheduled date).

We plan to implement additional improvements in the future as resources become available to PPAS.



Hugh L. Thompson, Jr., Acting Director
Planning & Program Analysis Staff
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Memorandum from W. J. Dircks,
dated December 12, 1980.