



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

April 29, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: Margaret M. Doane
Executive Director for Operations

THRU: Anton Vogel, Acting Director
Office of Enforcement

FROM: Lisamarie L. Jarriel *Lisamarie L. Jarriel*
Agency Allegation Advisor

SUBJECT: ALLEGATION PROGRAM CY 2020 ANNUAL TRENDS REPORT

In accordance with Management Directive 8.8, "Management of Allegations," dated January 29, 2016, the Agency Allegation Advisor is to offer the Executive Director for Operations an independent annual report analyzing allegation trends. A copy of the annual trends report for calendar year 2020 is enclosed.

The report analyzes national, regional, and site-specific trends in allegation data. From a national perspective, in the 5-year period between 2016 and 2020, the number of allegations continued to decline, but that decline slowed in 2020. Although six reactor plants ceased operations during this time period, and one stopped construction activities, their change in status alone does not explain the drop in the number of allegations received year to year. Increased focus by the agency and licensees on maintaining environments for raising concerns most likely also contributed to the declining trend. In considering whether the ten percent decline in 2020 was related to the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE), the staff reviewed data for allegations from onsite sources and, despite a reduced NRC presence onsite, saw no change in the percentage of allegations coming from that source. It is certainly possible that because licensees' onsite staffing and work was also limited to ensure fewer face-to-face interactions, the situation allowed for fewer conflicts or opportunities for error that might have otherwise translated into allegations. The allegation data, however, is not conclusive that the decline is related to the PHE in 2020.

The analyses also provide insights into the environment for raising concerns at one reactor site that was the subject of many allegations. A review of the number and nature of the allegations associated with the Vogtle construction site in 2020, and inspections conducted by the NRC, indicates that workers were not hesitant to raise safety concerns through many of the available reporting avenues. Furthermore, the NRC notes that the licensee has actively identified and addressed known weaknesses with effective corrective actions and continues to make improvements in many processes used to maintain a healthy environment for raising concerns. None of the operating reactor, materials, or vendor sites received a sufficient number of allegations to discern a trend or pattern or to provide insights into the work environment.

Enclosure:
As stated

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M. Doane

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