

Development of Fiscal Years 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan

JUNE 28, 2021

NRC PUBLIC MEETING

Opening Remarks



Catherine Haney

ASSISTANT FOR OPERATIONS

Agenda

- Opening Remarks and Agenda
- High-Level Draft Strategic Plan: Goals, Objectives and Strategies
- Annotated Outline of the Evidence-Building Plan
- Open Discussion
- Concluding Remarks

Strategic Plan Overview

- The strategic plan provides the blueprint for the agency to plan, implement and monitor the work needed to achieve our mission
 - Establishes the long-term strategic goals and objectives the agency aims to achieve
 - Identifies actions the agency will take to realize those goals
 - Provides a basis for agency budget and performance plans
- The strategic plan should not be a binding document that prevents agencies from learning and adapting their plans to changing circumstances
- Agencies must translate long-term goals in their Strategic Plans to strategic objectives and then to performance goals
- Agency Strategic Plans provide the framework for other plans and reports where agency performance goals and related analyses are communicated and monitored

Completed Activities

- Issued a *Federal Register* Notice and held a public meeting - September 2020
- High-Level Draft Strategic Plan
 - Framework for the Fiscal Years 2022-2026 Strategic Plan Goals, Objectives, and Strategies - [ML21165A241](#)
 - Key External Factors - [ML21165A243](#)
 - Annotated Outline of the Agency's Evidence-Building Plan - [ML21165A244](#)

Draft Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials

Safety and Security Objective 1: Provide quality licensing and oversight of nuclear facilities and radioactive materials

Safety and Security Objective 2: Ensure regulatory requirements adequately support the safe and secure use of radioactive materials

Safety and Security Objective 3: Maintain emergency preparedness and response capabilities for NRC and NRC-licensed facilities

Draft Goals and Objectives

Goal 2: Continue to foster a healthy organization

Organizational Dynamics Objective 1: Foster an organizational culture in which the workforce is engaged, adaptable, receptive to change, and makes high quality and timely decisions

Organizational Dynamics Objective 2: Enable the workforce to carry out the agency's mission by leveraging modern technology, innovation, and knowledge management to support data-driven decisions in an evolving regulatory landscape

Organizational Dynamics Objective 3: Attract, develop, and maintain a high-performing, diverse, engaged, and flexible workforce with the skills needed to carry out the NRC's mission now and in the future

Draft Goals and Objectives

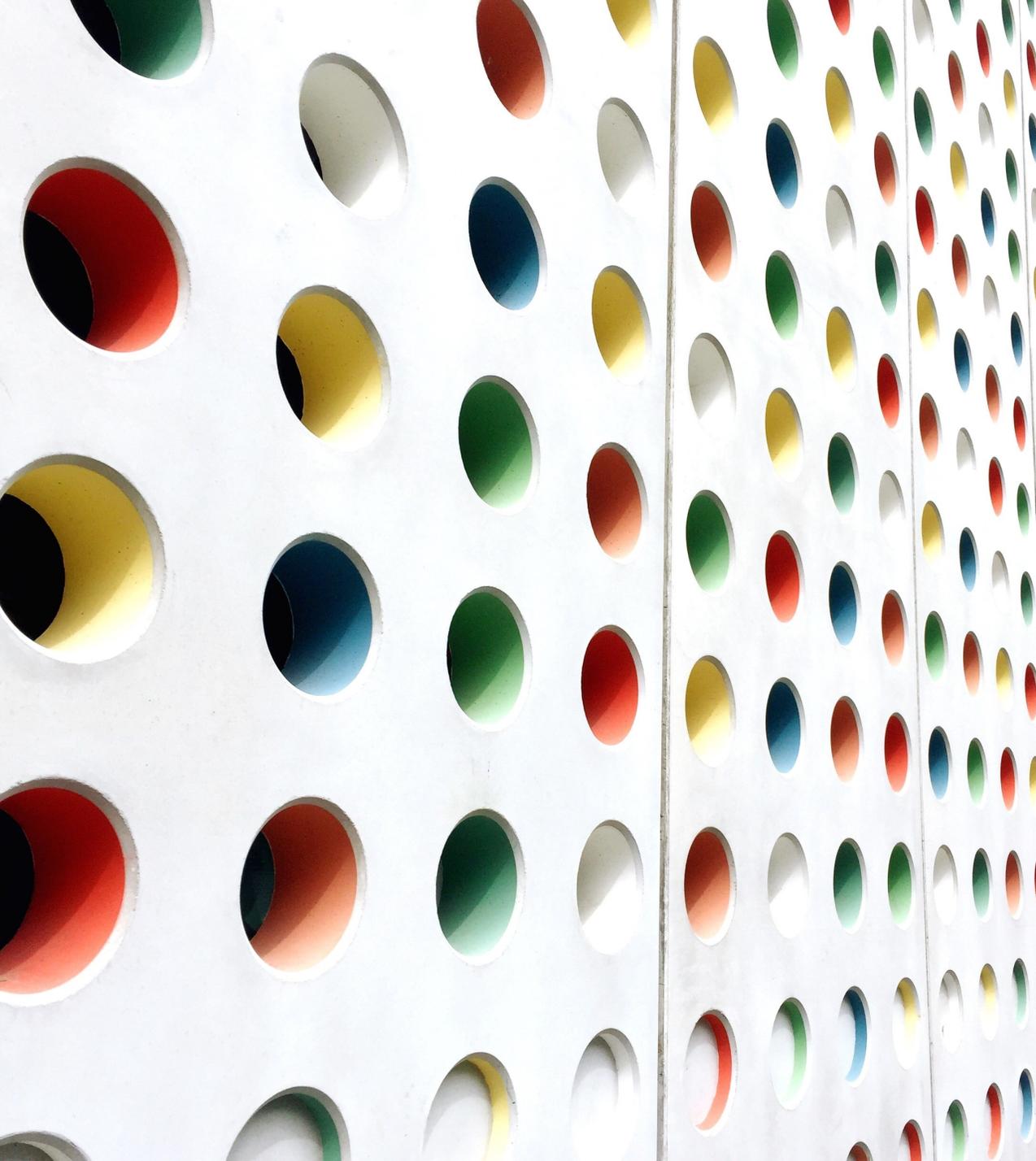
Goal 3: Inspire stakeholder confidence in the NRC

Stakeholder Confidence Objective 1: Engage stakeholders in NRC activities in an effective and transparent manner

Stakeholder Confidence Objective 2: Use high quality data and information in the NRC decision making process and ensure the information is available and accessible to interested stakeholders

Future Steps

- NRC submits the full draft of FYs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan that incorporates the full draft Evidence-Building Plan and Capacity Assessment for OMB Review: September 2021
- NRC submits the final draft FYs 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, to include the Evidence-Building Plan and Capacity Assessment to OMB for clearance: December 2021
- Final publication of the FYs 2022-2026 Agency Strategic Plan including separate sections detailing the agency's Evidence-Building Plan and Capacity Assessment: February 2022



NRC's Evidence Building Plan

JUNE 28, 2021

NRC PUBLIC MEETING

What is an Evidence-Building Plan



The Evidence-Building Plan is required by the Evidence Act and contains agency priority questions, which when answered, provide evidence to guide decisions to improve agency programs, operations, policies, and regulations.

- Priority questions are developed by engaging with internal and external stakeholders.
- Coordination tool that an agency can use to engage stakeholders in evidence planning and building to help achieve its mission.
- Intended to emphasize and foster an agency culture of learning and continuous improvement
- An evidence-building plan is iterative, flexible, transparent, and tailored to both meet an individual agency's needs and address agency-specific challenges.

Overview of Priority Questions

Goal 1: Ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials

How can the NRC improve licensing and oversight, based on recent operational experience (including lessons learned from the COVID-19 public health emergency)?

What stakeholder data would be most beneficial for use in advanced analytical tools (e.g., Artificial intelligence) to support NRC decision making?

To what extent are the NRC's computer codes capable of supporting independent analysis of the safety of advanced reactor designs and operations?

Goal 2: Continue to foster a healthy organization

To what extent are licensing actions performed by the NRC becoming more or less resource intensive over time and have there been any changes in work product quality?

To what extent are NRC's workforce planning processes adequately accommodating potential workload fluctuations?

What process improvements can be implemented to make the NRC a more modern, risk-informed regulator and how are they aligned with performance indicators?

How can the NRC better leverage research conducted through NRC-sponsored university research and development grants?

Goal 3: Inspire stakeholder confidence in the NRC

How can the NRC improve external engagement to inspire stakeholder confidence?

To what extent are the NRC's programs, policies, and activities addressing environmental justice?

Goal 1: Ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials

How can the NRC improve licensing and oversight, based on recent operational experience (including lessons learned from the COVID-19 public health emergency)?

- Gathering lessons learned and incorporating best practices from recent licensing and oversight activities can help NRC staff to focus on those activities that are most important to safety.
 - The NRC will identify lessons learned and collectively document temporary changes made to NRC licensing and oversight processes in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.
 - The NRC will further analyze these and other lessons learned to determine potential benefits and improvements to the NRC's licensing and oversight processes.
-
- Timeframe: FY 2022

Goal 1: Ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials

What stakeholder data would be most beneficial for use in advanced analytical tools (e.g., machine learning, artificial intelligence) to support NRC decision making?

- By improving how the NRC collects data and information, advanced analytical tools can be used more readily and have the potential to make decision making easier, faster, and more efficient.
 - Receiving data and information in formats that readily allow analysis through modeling or calculations allows for a more effective use of resources for both the NRC and licensees.
 - These data improvements will also be beneficial to members of the general public, as well as universities performing academic research in these areas.
-
- Timeframe: FY 2023

Goal 1: Ensure the safe and secure use of radioactive materials

To what extent are the NRC's computer codes capable of supporting independent analysis of the safety of advanced reactor designs and operations?

- The NRC routinely uses scientific computer codes and analytical tools to perform confirmatory, sensitivity, and uncertainty analyses to independently analyze the safety of advanced reactor designs.
- The NRC will perform analysis and research to
 - identify the reactor-systems-analysis computer codes, analytical tools, information, and data that the staff may need in evaluating the safety of non-light water reactor (non-LWR) designs;
 - assess the existing capability of computer codes, analytical tools, and supporting information;
 - identify gaps in both analytical capabilities and supporting information and data; and
 - interact with both domestic and international organizations working on non-LWR technologies to enhance collaboration and cooperation.
- Timeframe: FY 2022

Goal 2: Continue to foster a healthy organization

To what extent are licensing actions performed by the NRC becoming more or less resource intensive over time and have there been any changes in work product quality?

- Answering this priority question will help to ensure NRC licensing actions are of high quality and use an appropriate level of resources.
- The NRC will assess the licensing actions associated with the generic milestone schedules required by the Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act. The assessment will
 - determine if similar licensing actions have become more or less resource-intensive over time;
 - identify resource variances between similar licensing actions;
 - identify the factors contributing to the increase, decrease, and variance of resources for each type of licensing action; and
 - determine if there were any changes to the quality of the work products.
- Timeline: FY 2023

Goal 2: Continue to foster a healthy organization

To what extent are NRC's workforce planning processes adequately accommodating potential workload fluctuations?

- The goal of Strategic Workforce Planning (SWP) is to formulate strategies and action plans that enable the NRC to recruit, retain, and develop the workforce required to address emerging needs and workload fluctuations.
- The NRC will perform an evaluation that assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the current SWP processes and will compare estimated workloads and staffing projections against actual results.
- The NRC will engage with internal stakeholders using the SWP process and benchmark against other Federal agencies.
- Timeframe: FY 2023

Goal 2: Continue to foster a healthy organization

What process improvements can be implemented to make the NRC a more modern, risk-informed regulator and how are they aligned with performance indicators?

- The NRC uses a performance management framework that clearly and directly links program goals with the NRC Strategic Plan and institutionalizes the use of performance information in decision making.
- These policies and procedures and the NRC's performance management framework will move the agency toward being a more modern, risk-informed regulator.
- To answer this question, the staff will review agency policies, use mission analytics to identify process gaps, evaluate processes, and ensure alignment between the agency's policies and procedures and performance indicators.
- Timeframe: FY 2022 - 2024

Goal 2: Continue to foster a healthy organization

How can the NRC better leverage research conducted through NRC-sponsored university research and development grants?

- The NRC's University Nuclear Leadership Program is intended to develop a workforce capable of supporting the design, construction, operation, and regulation of nuclear facilities and the safe handling of nuclear materials.
- The NRC will perform an evaluation of the University Nuclear Leadership Program to identify opportunities to leverage university grants to support NRC research needs.
- The evaluation will include activities such as internal and external stakeholder engagement, process reviews, and benchmarking with other Federal agencies.
- Timeframe: FY 2024

Goal 3: Inspire stakeholder confidence in the NRC

How can the NRC improve external engagement to inspire stakeholder confidence?

- The NRC takes an active role in the Open Government Initiative by ensuring that the public is informed about and has a reasonable opportunity to meaningfully participate in the NRC's regulatory processes.
 - The NRC will assess the agency's current practices for external engagement to determine the effectiveness of these methods and to establish a baseline for stakeholder confidence.
 - The NRC will conduct an analysis, identify areas for improvement, and develop recommendations to inspire stakeholder confidence in areas where it is lacking.
-
- Timeframe: FY 2022

Goal 3: Inspire stakeholder confidence in the NRC

To what extent are the NRC's programs, policies, and activities addressing environmental justice?

- In the Policy Statement on the Treatment of Environmental Justice Matters in NRC Regulatory and Licensing Actions (69 Fed. Reg. 52040; August 4, 2004), the Commission stated the NRC will consider and integrate environmental justice matters as part of its National Environmental Policy Act review process.
- The NRC will review how the agency's programs, policies, and activities address environmental justice.
- The staff will evaluate recent Executive Orders and assess whether environmental justice is appropriately considered and addressed in the agency's programs, policies, and activities, such as adjudicatory procedures and environmental reviews, given the agency's mission.

- Timeline: FY 2021 - 2022

Open Discussion

Questions for Discussion

How can the NRC better share its progress towards the draft goals and objectives in a way that is meaningful to you?

Are there any important factors the NRC should consider when developing answers for the priority questions?

What information or data would be beneficial to include in the strategic plan?

What actions can the NRC take to continue building stakeholder confidence?

What contributing activities should be considered to support the draft goals and objectives?

How can the NRC better communicate using modern technology (e.g., social media, crowdsourcing)?