



November 23, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: Mirela Gavrilas, Director, Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response  
Mark Lombard, Director, Office of Enforcement

FROM: Eric Rivera */RA/*  
Acting Assistant Inspector General for Audit

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON STAFF RESPONSE TO THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S AUDIT OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION'S EMPLOYEE REENTRY PLANS (OIG-20-A-16)

REFERENCE: DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NUCLEAR SECURITY AND INCIDENT RESPONSE, AND DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ENFORCEMENT MEMORANDUM DATED NOVEMBER 12, 2021

Attached is the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) analysis and status of recommendations as discussed in the agency's response dated November 12, 2021. Based on this response, the recommendation 1 is now **closed**. All recommendations associated with this audit are now closed, and no further action is needed.

If you have questions or concerns, please call me at (301) 415-5915 or Paul Rades, Team Leader, at (301) 415-6228.

Attachment: As stated

cc: J. Jolicoeur, OEDO  
S. Miotla, OEDO  
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**Audit Report**  
**AUDIT OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR**  
**REGULATORY COMMISSION'S EMPLOYEE REENTRY PLANS**  
**(OIG-20-A-16)**  
**Status of Recommendations**

Recommendation 1: Capture and document lessons learned for future use during public health emergencies or other events that could cause prolonged disruption of agency operations.

Agency Response Dated  
November 12, 2021:

We recommend this recommendation be closed because the staff has collected, assessed, and implemented lessons learned throughout the pandemic for both regulatory programs and agency operations. Program office staff completed lessons-learned focused on agency licensing and oversight activities and incorporated the lessons into programs and processes. Specifically:

- In January 2021, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), with support from the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR) and the regions, published a report entitled, “Initial Report on Challenges, Lessons Learned and Best Practices from the 2020 COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Focus on Regulatory Oversight of Operating Nuclear Reactors.” The staff conducted surveys and interviews to develop recommendations that could help improve implementation of the Reactor Oversight Process during the continuing COVID-19 PHE; ensure the inspection program is adequately prepared for future emergencies; and identify processes and actions taken during the PHE that can be used during normal operations.
- In June 2021, the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) published a report entitled, “COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Oversight Activities Assessment – Phase A Report.” The staff conducted surveys and interviews to develop recommendations that could help improve implementation of the Nuclear Materials and Waste Safety Programs during the COVID-19 PHE and share challenges and good practices.

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Recommendation 1 (cont.):

- On June 10, 2021, the staff issued a memorandum to the NMSS and NRR Office directors that described using Nuclepedia to capture COVID-19 pandemic lessons learned. This accommodates a myriad of lessons learned, including the aforementioned reports.

Moreover, the staff established a Re-entry Team, a re-entry web page and associated Frequently Asked Questions to complement those developed by the COVID-19 Team and obtained Office of Management and Budget approval of the NRC re-entry plan. The COVID-19 and Re-entry teams gathered, assessed, and implemented changes to the re-entry approach (including telework, safety of the workforce, information technology, and parking) to incorporate lessons learned throughout the pandemic. As a result, we successfully re-entered on November 7, 2021.

Finally, in September 2021, NSIR provided its annual update to the Agency's Continuity of Operations and Pandemic Plans. These updates incorporated lessons learned from the Agency's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the development of a task force and working group structure to coordinate the internal agency response, communications, mitigation actions, vaccinations, and related issues.

OIG Analysis:

The completed actions meet the intent of this recommendation. The OIG reviewed the "Initial Report on Challenges, Lessons Learned and Best Practices from the 2020 COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Focus on Regulatory Oversight of Operating Nuclear Reactors," the "COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Oversight Activities Assessment – Phase A Report," the staff memorandum to the NMSS and NRR Office Directors, and relevant sections of Nuclepedia capturing COVID-19 pandemic lessons learned. The OIG also reviewed the re-entry web page, the approved re-entry plan, and the updated Continuity of Operations Plan and related procedures to assess documentation of COVID-19 pandemic lessons learned. This recommendation is now closed.

Status:

Closed.