



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

October 11, 2023

Subject: SUMMARY OF AUGUST 23, 2023, OBSERVATION PUBLIC MEETING WITH THE NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE TO DISCUSS APRIL 2023 REGULATORY ISSUES TASK FORCE OBSERVATIONS

Meeting Identifier: 20230920

Location: Webinar

Type of Meeting: Observation Public Meeting

Purpose of the Meeting: On August 23, 2023, an observation public meeting was held between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff and representatives of the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) via videoconference. The purpose of the meeting was for the NRC staff to present and discuss follow-up information related to the license amendment process observations provided by NEI representatives during an April 2023 regulatory issues task force (RITF) meeting. The meeting notice and agenda, dated August 11, 2023, is available in the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at Accession No. ML23235A167. The NRC's meeting slides are available in ADAMS as Accession No. ML23235A153.

General Details: The meeting was a virtual meeting conducted via Microsoft Teams platform. The meeting started at 3:00pm eastern time (ET) and concluded at 4:30pm ET. There were approximately 16 NRC staff and 15 external participants representing the NEI, the Pressurized Water Reactor Owners Group (PWROG), and the Breakthrough Institute that attended the meeting. No facilitator was used to conduct the meeting. A list of attendees is provided below.

Summary of Presentation: Mike King, Deputy Director for Reactor Safety Programs and Mission Support, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), provided opening remarks on behalf of the NRC. Mr. King emphasized the importance of NRC's licensing processes as part of maintaining the safety and licensing basis of the operating reactor fleet and acknowledged NEI's efforts on the part of the stakeholders who organized and participated in the last RITF meeting to share perspectives on what the industry is observing in the licensing area. He stated that the NRC recognizes the need for transparency regarding ongoing initiatives underway to improve licensing and that NRR's Division of Operating Reactor Licensing (DORL) has had several initiatives over the last few years to improve visibility of the process, track the workload, and establish more accurate schedule and hours estimates for licensing reviews. Finally, Mr. King stated that the primary goal of the meeting was to show the stakeholders and public the long-term vision for licensing at the NRC by providing an overview of the performance monitoring and workload management tools.

Bo Pham, Director, DORL, NRR, presented information contained within in the meeting slides referenced above. This included brief overviews of six observations provided by NEI during an April 2023 public meeting between the NRC and NEI's RITF (meeting summary Accession

No. ML23125A030), as well as observations from NEI's website regarding NRC performance of power uprate reviews. With respect to all observations, Mr. Pham provided DORL's perspectives of the observations based on an NRC staff review of workload management data.

Several meeting attendees asked clarifying questions and/or provided comments during the presentation. Notably:

- A meeting attendee from the industry inquired whether NRC's data presented with respect to review schedules was historical with respect to the number of reviews completed within 1 year. Mr. Pham responded that yes, the data being presented was historical, and he pointed to a "heat-map" graphic to show the time range of the data being presented. Mr. King further emphasized that NRC would continue to use updated information to help refine schedule estimates.
- A meeting attendee from the industry commented that they recognize that if NRC were to receive a large number of similar licensing action requests in a short period of time that utilize the same technical resources, that a backlog effect could occur and impact schedule estimates.
- A meeting attendee from the industry commented that a potential efficiency enhancement could be preparing model Safety Evaluations for all Technical Specification Risk Force (TSTF) travelers considering that the majority of licensing action requests are submitted per the TSTF process. Vic Cusumano, Acting Deputy Director, DORL, NRR, responded that this was a good suggestion, but from a resource perspective, preparing model Safety Evaluations should only be pursued after conducting a few reviews for the same TSTF traveler in order to get a good understanding of the number of future TSTF-related reviews.
- Mr. Titus inquired what the NRC's objective was for monitoring licensing action schedule estimates: to provide more predictability, or to provide more efficiency? Mr. Pham responded that, in essence, both objectives applied for NRC. Mr. King added that NRC also uses the information to gather learnings to do things better in the future.
- A meeting attendee from the industry inquired whether licensees could request background information from their DORL Project Manager (PM) when review time estimates are provided as part of acceptance review to better understand the time estimates. Mr. Pham responded that yes, the licensee can certainly engage with the NRC PM to better understand the basis for review hours estimates. Mr. Titus emphasized that communication is important throughout the licensing process and can avoid future miss-understanding surrounding schedule and hours estimates for licensing action reviews. Mr. Pham agreed with Mr. Titus' statement.
- With respect to NEI's observation regarding the NRC PM contribution hours data for licensing action reviews, Mr. King commented that even though there are ways to further reduce the administrative burden on PMs, their role is critical to NRC in providing oversight of licensing reviews. Mr. Titus agreed that the PMs do play a vital role and do contribute to the efficiency of reviews and that NEI's message was to emphasize the importance of listening to the PMs about things that could help make their jobs more efficient.
- Regarding NEI's observation regarding the potential to relocate the amendment implementation date from the amendment to the cover letter, Phil Couture, Entergy, commented that the work that goes in to changing an implementation date is not trivial from a review standpoint. Brian Mann, EXCEL Services, made similar observations. Mr. Pham suggested continued engagement between the NRC and NEI to gain further understanding of the licensee's burden in these instances of changing amendment

implementation dates. Mr. Titus commented that he recalled in prior interactions between the NRC and NEI the potential for conducting workshops or tabletops to provide an overview of the preparation of license amendments from the licensee’s standpoint for the benefit of NRC PMs. Mr. Titus stated that this effort could benefit both the licensees and the NRC to help each group understand each other’s processes better. Mr. Pham agreed that this could be beneficial at some point in the future.

Public Participation: Members of the public were present and had the opportunity to ask questions or make comments. No questions or comments were received.

Meeting Participants:

List of Attendees for August 23, 2023, Observation Public Meeting	
Name	Affiliation
Mike King	NRC
Bo Pham	NRC
Jamie Heisserer	NRC
Vic Cusumano	NRC
Gerond George	NRC
Rachael Davis	NRC
Luke Haeg	NRC
Jackie Harvey	NRC
Jennifer Dixon-Herrity	NRC
Richard Bright	NRC
Doug Broaddus	NRC
Brent Ballard	NRC
Undine Shoop	NRC
Carla Roque-Cruz	NRC
Rob Krsek	NRC
Dan King	NRC
Brett Titus	NEI
Deann Raleigh	Curtiss Wright
Shawna Hughes	Tennessee Valley Authority
Richard Garcia	Energy Northwest
Fred Madden	Certrec
Drew Richards	South Texas Project
Brian Mann	EXCEL Services
Christopher Staum	Constellation Nuclear
Leigh Lloveras	Breakthrough Institute
Phil Couture	Entergy
Jordan Vaughan	Duke Energy
Charlyne Smith	Breakthrough Institute
Jeanne Johnston	Southern Company
James Andrachek	Westinghouse
James Lynde	Constellation Nuclear
Chad Holderbaum	Westinghouse

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ADAMS Accession Nos.:

ML23269A035 (Package)

ML23235A167 (Meeting Notice)

ML23235A153 (NRC Meeting Slides)

ML23269A043 (Meeting Summary)

NRC-001

OFFICE	NRR/DORL/LPL2-2/PM	NRR/DORL/LLPB/LA	NRR/DORL/LLPB/BC
NAME	LHaeg	DHarrison	GGeorge
DATE	9/25/2023	9/27/2023	9/28/2023
OFFICE	NRR/DORL/D	NRR/DORL/LPL2-2/PM	
NAME	BPham	LHaeg	
DATE	10/11/2023	10/11/2023	

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