

# **COORDINATION PLAN FOR ENHANCING THE NRC'S PROGRAM FOR NEW AND ADVANCED REACTOR CODES AND STANDARDS**

*An Information Sharing Effort by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Idaho National Laboratory*

## **Background**

This Coordination Plan documents coordination between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and Idaho National Laboratory (INL) staffs on enhancing the NRC's program for codes and standards for new and advanced reactors. The October 7, 2019, Memorandum of Understanding between the NRC and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) pursuant to the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-248) provides this framework.

The NRC uses voluntary consensus codes and standards as an integral part of the NRC's regulatory framework. Codes and standards contain technical requirements, safety requirements, guidelines, characteristics, and recommended practices for performance. The NRC incorporates some codes and standards directly into regulations and endorses other codes and standards in its guidance, such as Regulatory Guides (RGs), on acceptable methods for complying with NRC regulations.

The NRC's codes and standards program involves staff across the agency who participate in various working groups and codes and standards committees to support the development of consensus codes and standards. This work further supports the agency's review of codes and standards for incorporation by reference or endorsement. The program is aligned with the National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995 (NTTAA) as detailed in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-119, "Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and in Conformity Assessment Activities."

INL is one of the DOE laboratories performing research and development activities that support the development and update of consensus codes and standards to support new and advanced reactor development and deployment. These activities are funded and supported through the DOE's Office of Nuclear Energy (DOE-NE).

## **Overall Objective and Scope**

The intended objective of this effort is the sharing of technical expertise and knowledge to identify opportunities to enhance aspects of the NRC's codes and standards program that could increase the efficiency of NRC's licensing and oversight of new and advanced reactors.

The intended scope of this effort includes evaluation of publicly available reports to identify the most critical codes and standards needed to successfully deploy advanced reactors. The NRC and INL plan to hold a public meeting with invited speakers and structured dialogue to gain additional insights on both needed codes and standards and the effectiveness of the NRC's codes and standards program to provide timely review and endorsement of new or revised codes and standards. Potential outcomes include:

- near-term actions for development or endorsement of specific codes and standards;
- new or novel approaches to the development of regulatory guidance, aligned with the agency's Principles of Good Regulation;
- an NRC action plan with milestones and dates for implementation of proposed changes to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the NRC's codes and standards program.

### **Schedule of Activities**

The NRC and INL plan to meet weekly to facilitate completion of the objective for this effort. Additional meetings will be held as needed. The current schedule for potential activities includes:

- A public meeting notice will be issued by the NRC before March 4, 2024.
- Public meeting is planned for April 4, 2024.
- Near-term actions will be identified by the NRC by April 25, 2024.
- The meeting summary and action plan will be completed by the NRC by May 5, 2024.
- Identification of additional future coordination activities will be completed by June 6, 2024.