



FEMA

MEMORANDUM FOR: Jeffrey Stern, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrator (Acting)
National Preparedness Directorate
Federal Emergency Management Agency

THRU: David Gudinas
Deputy Assistant Administrator (Acting)
National Preparedness Directorate
Federal Emergency Management Agency

FROM: Bruce C Foreman
Director
Technological Hazards Division
Federal Emergency Management Agency

SUBJECT: Decision Memorandum: Oconee Nuclear Station Alert and Notification System
Significant Change

Pursuant to FEMA Delegation of Authority Number: FDA- 800-21-0002, issued September 17, 2021, the Assistant Administrator for the National Preparedness Directorate, approves or disapproves significant Radiological Emergency Preparedness Plan changes.

On, April 3, 2024, FEMA Region 4 forwarded, for review and approval, an updated Alert and Notification System (ANS) Evaluation Report for Oconee Nuclear Station (ONS), dated December 2024. The proposed update represents a significant change to the state plan and therefore, in accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 350.14, requires FEMA Headquarters (HQ) review and approval. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 350.14, FEMA Region 4 reviewed the proposed changes and recommended approval of the report.

The Report includes the following proposed changes:

- Replaces the primary alerting system, sirens, and the primary notification system with the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System - Wireless Emergency Alerts (IPAWS-WEA) and
- Replaces route alerting and notification as a backup system with the use of sirens and the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

The Technological Hazards Division (THD) agrees in principle with the updated ONS ANS Evaluation Report and believes the plan when implemented would adequately protect the health and

safety of the public surrounding the ONS. However, we note the State of South Carolina's Evaluation Report does not include initial and periodic testing of the primary notification systems (IPAWS-WEA) in the plume exposure emergency planning zone (EPZ).

We recognize this shortcoming is mitigated by South Carolina's prolific use of IPAWS-WEA during real-world incidents across the state. However, THD believes alert and notification system testing within the EPZ to demonstrate equipment adequacy (performance, availability, and reliability) is a sound emergency management principle, and builds alerting authority confidence and proficiency in the system. Additionally, we concur the IPAWS Program Office identification of IPAW-WEAS Testing as a best practice in the IPAWS Best Practices Guide dated June 2023.

Please contact George Odom, Engineering and Technology Section Chief, Policy and Doctrine Branch, Technological Hazards Division, (202) 802-6989 if you have any questions regarding this memorandum.

Recommendation: Approval. Upon signature, return this ONS ANS Significant Change Decision Memorandum to THD; approve and sign FEMA Approval Letter to the NRC; return FEMA Approval Letter to the NRC and ONS ANS Evaluation Report Package to THD for distribution to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for their review and acceptance.

APPROVE: _____, Date: _____

DISAPPROVE: _____, Date: _____

Cc: Nan Williams, (Acting) Chief, Policy and Doctrine Branch, Technological Hazards Division

John Ackermann, Chief, Technological Hazards Branch, FEMA Region 4