

**POLICY ISSUE**  
**NOTATION VOTE**

**RESPONSE SHEET**

**TO:** Carrie M. Safford, Secretary  
**FROM:** Commissioner Wright  
**SUBJECT:** SECY-26-0014: Recommendations to Revise the  
Reactor Oversight Process Baseline Inspection  
Program

Approved  Disapproved  Abstain  Not Participating

COMMENTS: Below  Attached  None

**Entered in STAR**

Yes

No

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Signature

## **Commissioner Wright’s Comments on SECY-26-0014, “Recommendations to Revise the Reactor Oversight Process Baseline Inspection Program”**

In SECY-26-0014, the NRC staff recommends revisions to the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) baseline inspection program and issue screening guidance. The staff’s positions are grounded in a strong analytical foundation—drawing on historical inspection findings, identifying redundancies, and benchmarking practices across the federal government. Once again, the staff has met the moment with clarity and conviction, and I commend their thoughtful approach to this important work.

### ROP Baseline Inspection Program

The recommendations affect a wide range of inspection procedures that underpin reactor safety, emergency preparedness, radiation protection, and problem identification and resolution (PI&R). The staff proposes consolidating redundant procedures, reducing team size, and streamlining inspection hours. These changes reflect a sharper focus on risk-significant activities and a commitment to efficiency without compromising safety.

I approve the staff’s recommendations on the ROP baseline inspection program except for the PI&R inspection and the engineering inspection.

For PI&R, history matters. Over the past seven years, the Commission has deliberated policy on this inspection multiple times.<sup>1</sup> I continue to believe the team approach adds value. Redirecting this program to resident inspectors would miss the opportunity for a fresh perspective on licensee corrective action programs. Therefore, the staff should adopt the option described in Enclosure 2 to maintain the PI&R team inspection, shift to a triennial frequency, reduce the team size by two members, and narrow the scope to licensee corrective action programs.

For engineering inspections, I support the Chairman’s recommendation to perform the revised 175-hour team inspections once every three years rather than annually. As part of the staff’s planned IMC 0307 overall ROP self-assessment, the staff should perform an engineering inspection assessment by December 2027.

### Issue Screening Guidance

The staff presented a compelling case for streamlining issue screening. Their approach emphasizes issues that truly impact safety cornerstones and deemphasizes minor compliance matters. The intent to inform licensees of undocumented minor issues, while expecting timely correction, fosters a culture of voluntary compliance and aligns with practices across other federal agencies.

I approve the staff’s recommendations on issue screening.

### Looking Ahead

Finally, we must look forward. The rapid deployment of nuclear technology demands a robust pipeline of qualified construction and resident inspectors. Now is the time to orient our programs to support future growth. In evolving the ROP, the staff should implement policies that intentionally develop the next generation of inspectors. Safety is our ever-present North Star, and preparing for tomorrow is part of that mission.

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., “Recommendation for Problem Identification and Resolution Team Inspection Frequency,” Commission Paper SECY-22-0087, (Sep. 20, 2022) (ML22145A448) and Commissioner David A. Wright’s Comments on SECY-22-0087, “Recommendation for Problem Identification and Resolution Team Inspection Frequency” (Feb. 2023) (ML23052A060).