



BACKGROUND

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Realizing Efficiencies in the Reactor Security Inspection Program

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, after considering 25 years of agency experience and knowledge gains, voted April 3, 2026, to approve plans that refocus and sharpen nuclear power plant security inspections. These changes maintain the foundational goals of security inspection while expending about half the resources previously needed. This approach, focusing on issues most important to security, carries out direction from the bipartisan ADVANCE Act and Executive Order 14300.

The NRC's fresh look at the basics of security inspection found the program should assess a plant's overall security activities rather than review a list of discrete requirements. The revised approach emphasizes observing a plant's most significant security operations and performance measures. Consolidating multiple inspection procedures into those categories leaves the NRC's resident and specialized physical security inspectors better able to gauge plant performance.

Focus on Ensuring Security Performance

Resident inspectors will continue to observe day-to-day security operations and equipment to ensure physical security plans and procedures are appropriately implemented and that any shortfalls are immediately identified and resolved. Regional security inspectors will perform in-depth looks at a sample of activities and performance in topics such as access control, equipment testing and maintenance, security training, and fitness for duty.

The revisions also cover the required "force-on-force" mock attacks that evaluate a plant's entire security posture at one time. The revised process better incorporates licensee resources into the development of exercise scenarios while maintaining the NRC's review and approval authority. This optimizes the planning and resources needed to properly judge a plant's ability to stop a realistic attacking force. The revisions help ensure plants maintain robust security that protects public health and safety.

Impact on Licensees

U.S. nuclear power plants must continue meeting NRC requirements to defend their facilities, and agency inspectors will continue to ensure any security issues are promptly and appropriately addressed. What's new for the plants is the ability to allocate their resources most effectively. Plants will also be better able to integrate FOF activities into their active security operations.

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