

February 4, 1999

SECY 99-037

For: The Commissioners

From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office  
of the EDO /s/

Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING JANUARY 29, 1999

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\*No input this week.

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Contact:  
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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Completion of Audits of Nuclear Power Plant Year 2000 (Y2K) Readiness Programs

During the week of January 25, 1999, the staff of the Instrumentation and Controls Branch conducted the final three of the 12 sample audits of nuclear power plant Y2K readiness programs. These audits were conducted at the Virginia Power North Anna plant, Commonwealth Edison Braidwood station, and Washington Nuclear Power plant Unit 2. Initial observations indicate that these licensees are implementing effective Y2K readiness programs consistent with the industry guidance in NEI/NUSMG 97-07 for overall Y2K problem issues and 98-07 for contingency planning. The results of the audits will be published in reports which will be available in approximately 30 days from completion of the audits. The staff plans to issue an information notice in the Spring with the overall results and lessons learned from the 12 sample audits.

Barrier Control Initiative

Some licensees have expressed an interest in establishing a methodology that is acceptable to the staff for controlling barriers at nuclear power plants. Barriers are used to protect personnel and equipment from flooding, missiles, steam line break, etc., and licensees occasionally have a need to remove a barrier from service to provide access to equipment or a particular area of the plant. In some cases, this can be accomplished in accordance with the provisions of the Maintenance Rule and GL 91-18. However, there are instances that arise where technical specifications may be involved, multiple trains (or units) may be affected, or the activity does not fit under the maintenance umbrella, where generic guidance could be useful. Licensees for Comanche Peak, San Onofre, Palo Verde, Cooper, Diablo Canyon, and Summer have expressed an interest in this topic, and Texas Utilities Electric Company (in concert with the Southern California Edison Company and the Nebraska Public Power District) has submitted a draft topical report proposing a methodology for controlling barriers. The Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) recently expressed an interest in this topic and discussed it briefly with the staff during a phone call on January 22, 1999. An open meeting is currently planned for the last week in February to discuss this matter further with NEI, Texas Utilities Electric Company, and other industry representatives, and to provide feedback on the staff's review of the draft topical report that was submitted for barrier control. Risk insights will be considered, along with existing requirements and deterministic criteria, in determining an appropriate course of action on this topic.

Part 50 Appendix K Exemption and Proposed Rulemaking

On January 22, 1999, the Reactor Systems Branch completed its portion of a safety evaluation accepting the exemption request by Texas Utilities Electric Company regarding a requirement in Appendix K to Part 50. When issued, the exemption will allow Comanche Peak Units 1 and 2 to propose a reduced margin in the assumed power required for emergency core cooling system (ECCS) analysis. The current requirement is that the analysis be conducted at 2 percent above the licensed power level to account for power measurement uncertainty. The licensee made the request to support a 1-percent power uprate based on the application of the leading edge

flowmeter (LEFM) system. The power uprate request was submitted in December 1998. LEFM offers reduced feedwater flow measurement uncertainty, which translates to reduced plant thermal power measurement uncertainty. Allowing credit for the lower uncertainty through an exemption to the 102 percent power requirement may eventually allow the plant to increase power without revising ECCS analyses. Other analyses associated with increasing operating power will still be required.

Associated with its request, the licensee submitted the Caldon, Inc., Topical Report No. ER-80P, "Improving Thermal Power Accuracy and Plant Safety While Increasing Operating Power Level Using the LEFM System." The topical report is expected to be used by other utilities in their requests for similar licensing actions.

### Oconee Nuclear Station Units 1, 2, and 3

On January 19, 1999, NRR issued its Oconee Emergency Electrical Power System Final Report. This completed a reexamination of the Oconee emergency electrical system that began in August 1995, and closed out issues raised in NRR's Draft Report (dated June 14, 1996) and Interim Report (dated March 17, 1998). The reexamination was initiated due to the unique Oconee design feature that uses two Keowee hydro generators to supply the emergency electrical equipment. As a result of the review, the staff did not identify any vulnerabilities in the design or operation of the emergency electrical system that require immediate corrective action.

### Lasalle Units 1 And 2

On January 19, 1999, the NRC met with Commonwealth Edison to discuss LaSalle Unit 1 operation and the status of Unit 2 restart. Unit 1 restarted in August 1998 after a 22 month outage and Unit 2 has been in an extended refueling outage since September 1996. Unit 1 has operated nearly continuously since restart with the exception of a 7 day planned maintenance outage in December 1998. The licensee indicated that the station is meeting its goals regarding unplanned loss factor, maintenance backlog, and personnel error rate but they are still trying to improve non-outage work control and human performance. Unit 2 is scheduled to restart on May 2, 1999, and reach full power by June 1, 1999. The station is completing modifications and beginning system testing and turnovers. The NRC Operational Readiness Inspection is tentatively scheduled for March 29, 1999. The licensee stated that it is confident that the schedule for restart can be met based on the fact that nearly all of the design change packages have been issued and they are meeting their goals for completing work request tasks.

### Arkansas Nuclear One

In a public meeting with senior NRR management on January 22, 1999, executives from Entergy announced that Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1 (ANO-1) intends to submit an application for license renewal. ANO-1 is a Babcock & Wilcox Nuclear Steam Supply System design similar to Oconee. The current operating license expires in May 2014.

Entergy's schedule is to submit the application in December 1999. Entergy executives noted that they plan to submit a renewal application similar to Oconee and implement relevant lessons learned from the Calvert Cliffs and Oconee applications; specifically, ANO-1 plans to include relevant information from Oconee responses to staff requests for additional information.

### Management Changes

In July 1998, in anticipation of the restart of LaSalle Unit 1, the Unit 2 restart organization began reporting to the corporate office to allow the Unit 2 work to continue without distracting the station's focus for restarting Unit 1. The Unit 2 Restart Organization had its own Operations, Maintenance, Engineering, and Radiation Protection managers. As the Unit 2 extended outage nears the end of the construction phase, the focus will shift to testing and system turnover which will require greater coordination and interaction with Operations. Therefore, effective January 18, 1999, ComEd returned all Unit 2 functions under the line organization. The Unit 2 Restart Manager now reports to the LaSalle site vice president and the restart organization will only include work control associated with the outage. Maintenance, Operations, Engineering, and Radiation Protection Managers all report to the Station Manager. This will enable the site to gradually transition to dual unit operations. In addition, on January 18, 1999, Jim Meister, the previous Unit 2 restart engineering manager, became the Site Engineering Manager.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program Training Session

On January 25, 1999, approximately 15 individuals from the Agreement States, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Regional Offices, the Office of State Programs (OSP) and the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) participated in a one-day training session on the Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP). OSP and NMSS conducted the training in the NRC Headquarters Professional Development Center. It provided background information, historical perspective, IMPEP philosophy, and process sequence to new IMPEP reviewers. The training included a group exercise to apply the criteria, and a mock close out meeting. Participants were also provided with the schedule and review assignments for all of the Agreement State and Regional reviews to be conducted in FY 1999.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission Material Protection Control and Accounting Funding Meeting with the Department of Energy

On January 26, 1999, members of the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards staff met with representatives of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Material Protection Control and Accounting (MPC&A) Task Force to continue discussions regarding FY 1999 funding of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) project costs for MPC&A assistance to Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. NRC staff were informed that DOE officials have committed to fund NRC Russian activities for FY 1999. NRC and DOE staff are currently working on a reimbursable agreement to transfer DOE funds to NRC concurrent with work on project assistance tasks. NRC staff will be meeting with the DOE representatives in the near future to resolve funding issues with Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

Three Confirmatory Orders issued to March Metalfab, Incorporated, and two Managers at March Metalfab

On January 27, 1999, the Office of Enforcement issued Confirmatory Orders prohibiting March Metalfab and the two individuals from any involvement in Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)-licensed activities for five years. The orders were issued as the result of an Office of Investigations report substantiating that the managers deliberately made inaccurate statements to NRC during an inspection by the Spent Fuel Project Office in March 1997. These statements concerned undocumented welds on VSC-24 spent fuel storage containers and delayed NRC in taking action to ensure the integrity of the containers.

Department of Energy Submits Yucca Mountain Topical Report on Disposal Criticality Analysis Methodology

The Department of Energy (DOE) recently submitted its Topical Report on Disposal Criticality Analysis Methodology to the Division of Waste Management (DWM). The topical report and its extensive references represent DOE's three-year work in developing the risk-informed methodology to be used for performing postclosure criticality analyses for waste forms in the proposed repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. The methodology is generic in that it is

intended to be applicable to all waste forms (commercial spent fuel, Navy and other DOE-owned spent fuels, vitrified high-level waste) anticipated for disposal in the repository. The methodology is also applicable to the potential for criticality within the waste packages and outside the waste packages in the near-field and far-field environments. For commercial and Navy spent fuel waste packages, the methodology employs consideration of the effects of fuel burnup on the generation of fission product poisons, actinide poisons and fissionable actinides. If the methodology is accepted, DOE will request NRC's review of the application of the methodology to specific waste forms and package designs, demonstrating the acceptability of the proposed systems for limiting the potential for postclosure criticality at the Yucca Mountain repository. DOE indicated that a classified addendum to the topical report would be submitted in September 1999 to address the application of the methodology to intact Navy spent fuel. An acceptance review of the topical report has been started by DWM staff, and should be finished by mid-February. If accepted, a technical detailed review of the report will follow in the upcoming months.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Technical Program Review of U. S. Geological Survey's Amargosa Desert Research Site Studies

Staff from the Division of Regulatory Applications participated in a technical program review of the U.S. Geological Survey's (USGS) Amargosa Desert Research Site (ADRS) studies. The ADRS is located near Beatty, Nevada adjacent to US Ecology's Nevada Facility which contains both low-level radioactive waste and hazardous waste disposal facilities. The technical review included a field trip to the ADRS to examine ongoing field studies, and an overview of current and proposed research activities. The overall research objective is to improve understanding of and methods for characterizing the mechanisms that control transport and fate of contaminants in arid environments. The proposed research studies were reviewed for their relevancy to understanding factors and processes that control water balance and water (i.e., both liquid and vapor) and gas flow, and specifically, mechanisms controlling transport and fate of tritium and carbon-14 in the unsaturated zone. An important motivating factor to continue research studies was the observation by USGS scientists that, to date, field observations of carbon-14 dioxide distributions at the ADRS can be explained to some extent by gas-transport theory, but field observations of tritiated water vapor distributions cannot be explained by present physical, geochemical and isotropic transfer theory. Discussions of future plans focused on field experiments and monitoring methods to quantify transport, particularly tritium, in the layered alluvial units above the regional water table. The results from this research could be valuable to the NRC staff in assessing radionuclide transport via liquid and vapor flow, particularly tritium and carbon-14 migration. Specific information on the ADRS and a bibliography of accomplished field studies can be downloaded from the ADRS website, <http://nevada.usgs.gov/adrs/>.

Incident Response Operations  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

State Outreach Session Conducted

On Tuesday, January 26, 1999, a member of IRO conducted a State Outreach session along with representatives from NRC Region I and other Federal agencies for State and county officials, licensees, and others from the State of New York. Over 81 persons were in attendance. Other States in attendance included Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The Outreach session was in preparation for the Ingestion Pathway exercise to be conducted at the Indian Point 2 plant in May of this year. Subjects included Federal response resources in support of State and local governments in response to a major nuclear power plant emergency.

Preliminary Notifications:

1. PNO-I-99-05, Lancaster General Hospital, CONTAMINATED PACKAGE
2. PNO-I-99-006, Northeast Utilities (Millstone 2), INADVERTENT TRANSFER OF WATER FROM THE MILLSTONE UNIT 2 SPENT FUEL POOL
3. PNO-II-99-001, Tennessee Dept. of Transportation, RECOVERED CESIUM-137 SOURCE
4. PNO-II-99-002, United States Army Training & Doctrine Command, IMMEDIATE NOTIFICATION OF NRC OPERATIONS CENTER OF LOSS OF LICENSED MATERIAL
5. PNO-III-99-003, Michigan Electric Co. (Cook 1 & 2), RESTART SCHEDULE DEFERRED TO PERFORM ADDITIONAL ENGINEERING REVIEWS
6. PNO-IV-99-004A, Sperry-Sun Drilling Services, Inc., LOSS OF 2 CURIE CESIUM-137 DENSITY LOGGING SOURCE DURING SHIPMENT - UPDATE
7. PNO-IV-99-005, Entergy Operations, Inc., (Grand Gulf 1), UNIT SHUTDOWN FOR GREATER THAN 72 HOURS DUE TO APPARENT SAFETY-RELATED SWITCHGEAR CURRENT TRANSFORMER DEGRADATION
8. PNO-IV-99-006, Global X-Ray & Testing Corp., INDUSTRIAL RADIOGRAPHY RADIATION OVEREXPOSURE
9. PNO-IV-99-007, Hawaiian Eye Center, PATIENTS RECEIVED LESS THAN THE PRESCRIBED STRONTIUM-90 DOSE
10. PNO-IV-99-008, Technical Welding, ANNUAL TOTAL EFFECTIVE DOSE EQUIVALENT IN EXCESS OF 5.0 REMS
11. PNO-IV-99-009, H&G Inspection Company, ANNUAL TOTAL EFFECTIVE DOSE EQUIVALENT IN EXCESS OF 5.0 REMS



12. PNO-IV-99-010, C.T. Nevada, STOLEN PORTABLE MOISTURE/DENSITY GAUGE
13. PNO-IV-99, 011, Coder X-Ray & Welding Services, ANNUAL TOTAL EFFECTIVE DOSE EQUIVALENT IN EXCESS OF 5.0 REMS

Office of Administration  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Nuclear Information and Resource Service: Receipt of Petitions for Rulemaking (PRM-50-65, PRM-50-66 and PRM -50-67)

A document that requests public comment on petitions for rulemaking submitted by the Nuclear Information and Resource Service was published in the Federal Register on January 25, 1999 (64 FR 3790, 64 FR 3791). The petitioner requests that the NRC amend its regulations to (1) require the shutdown of nuclear facilities that are not compliant with date-sensitive, computer-related issues regarding the Year 2000 (Y2K); (2) require every nuclear utility to conduct a full-scale emergency planning exercise that involves coping with a date-sensitive, computer-related failure resulting from a Year 2000 issue (Y2K); and (3) require that nuclear facilities ensure the availability of electricity to power atomic reactor and other nuclear facility safety systems in the event of a date-sensitive, computer-related incident resulting from a Year 2000 issue (Y2K). The comment period for each of these actions closes February 24, 1999.

Chief Information Officer  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of  
January 22, 1999 through January 28, 1999:

OI reports, 13 specific report numbers. (FOIA/PA 99-098)

Japanese type A, fissile nuclear shipping package, 9/1/95 to present. (FOIA/PA 99-099)

Environmental assessment, property at 175 Clearbrook Rd., Elmsford, Westchester County, NY,  
1958 to 1975. (FOIA/PA 99-100)

Allegation file no. RII-96-A-0072. (FOIA/PA 99-101)

IMPAC listing. (FOIA/PA 99-102)

Full Integral Simulation Test (FIST) facility, drawings and experimental data. (FOIA/PA 99-103)

Self training courses, 11/81 through 01/91. (FOIA/PA 99-104)

Office of Human Resources  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending January 29, 1999

<b>Arrivals</b>		
BAKER, Lynda	SECRETARY (OA)	RIV
CAVERLY, Jill	GENERAL ENGINEER	NMSS
LACKNER, Flora	GENERAL SCIENTIST (INTERN)	NMSS
LARSON, Gaye	SECRETARY (OA)	RIII
SCENNA, Richard	CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OIG
<b>Retirements</b>		
BECKER, Edythe	SECRETARY (OA)	NRR
BENDER, Margaret	HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST	HR
<b>Departures</b>		
CUMMINS, Michael	CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OIG
PURSEL, Robert	CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OIG

Associate Director for Training and Development Student Data

Course	Location	Number of Attendees			
		Total	Region	HQ	Other
GE BWR/4 Simulator Refresher R704B	TTC	3	3	0	0
Westinghouse Technology Review R-904P	TTC	6	6	0	0
Site Access Refresher H-101	PDC	15	0	15	0
Site Access H-100	PDC	14	4	0	0
Safety Monitor Software Training	PDC	9	3	2	4

Office of State Programs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

IMPEP Training Session

On January 25, 1999, approximately 15 individuals from the Agreement States, the NRC Regions, the Office of State Programs (OSP) and the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) participated in a one-day training session on the Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP). OSP and NMSS conducted the training in the TWFN Professional Development Center. It provided background information, historical perspective, IMPEP philosophy and process sequence to new IMPEP reviewers. The training included a group exercise to apply the criteria, and a mock Agreement State review close out meeting. Participants were also provided with a manual containing IMPEP procedures and background information, as well as the schedule and review assignments for all of the Agreement State and Regional reviews to be conducted in FY99.

Office of Public Affairs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Media Interest

Chairman Jackson was interviewed by National Businesswoman's Magazine for an article that will be published in March. The Chairman was also interviewed by Black Issues in Higher Education.

The York (Penn.) Daily Record is planning a five-part series on the anniversary of Three Mile Island.

The St. Petersburg Times (Fla.) Is publishing a story on the Crystal River restart.

<b>Press Releases</b>	
<b>Headquarters:</b>	
99-12	Note to Editors: Agenda Change for ACRS Meeting
99-13	NRC Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Changes to its Reactor Inspection and Oversight Program
99-14	Note to Editors: FY 2000 Budget Briefing
99-15	Independent Review of Millstone Firings Ordered
99-16	NRC Bars California Company and Two of its Managers From NRC Licensed Activities for Five Years
<b>Regions:</b>	
I-99-07	NRC, PSE&G to Discuss Outages Planned for Spring at Two Plants
I-99-09	NRC, BG&E to Discuss License Renewal Inspection
II-99-05	NRC Names New Senior Resident Inspector at Brunswick Nuclear Power Plant
III-99-06	NRC Reschedules Meeting For February 5 to Discuss Findings of Inspection Into Dec. 9 Fire at Portsmouth Uranium Plant

Office of International Programs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Subgroup on Nuclear Export Coordination

The Subgroup on Nuclear Export Coordination (SNEC), an interagency committee chaired by the Department of State, met on Friday, January 29, to discuss seven Department of Commerce dual-use cases involving exports to India and China. There was also a discussion of preparations for several February 1999 Nuclear Suppliers Group and Zangger Committee Working Group Meetings, which will take place in Vienna, Austria. The U.S. delegation will be led by the Executive Branch. Finally, there was a brief discussion of issues to be addressed at an upcoming meeting of the Executive Branch with European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) officials on the status of implementation of the U.S.-EURATOM Agreement for Cooperation.

Visit of Lars Högberg. SKI

Lars Högberg, Director General of the Swedish Nuclear Power Inspectorate (SKI) and the newly appointed Chairman of the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) Steering Committee, met with the Commissioners and senior staff following the meeting of the International Nuclear Regulators Association in Region IV January 21-22. During the course of his meetings, a number of subjects were discussed, including the need to maintain safety following a utility decision to decommission a facility, changes in the reactor oversight process, the nuclear waste situation in Sweden, and radiation limits in Sweden and the US.

Office of the Secretary  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Documents Released to Public	Date	Subject
<b>Decision Documents</b>		
1. M990120A	1/22/99	Staff Requirements - Affirmation Session, 9:20 A.M., Wednesday, January 20, 1999: 1. SECY-98-279: Partial Granting of Petition for Rulemaking Submitted by the Nuclear Energy Institute
Commission Voting Record on Secy-98-279	1/22/99	(same)
2. SECY-98-256	11/3/98	Proposed Revision to the Enforcement Policy to Address Severity Level IV Violations at Power Reactors
SRM on 98-256	1/22/99	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-256	1/22/99	(same)
3. COMSECY-98-038	12/21/98	WITS 9700191 and 9800044 - Request for Schedule and Milestone Changes (Tasking Memo Item IV.B) - 10 CFR 50.59 Rulemaking
SRM on 98-038	1/27/99	(same)
Chairman Jackson comments on 98-038	1/7/99	(same)
Commissioner Dicus comments on 98-038	1/7/99	(same)
Commissioner Diaz comments on 98-038	1/11/99	(same)
Commissioner McGaffigan comments on 98-038	1/12/99	(same)
Commissioner Merrifield comments on 98-038	12/29/98	(same)



4.	M990111	1/27/99	Staff Requirements - Briefing on Risk-Informed Initiatives, 2:00 p.m., Monday, January 11, 1999
5.	SECY-99-006	1/8/99	Re-Examination of the NRC Hearing Process
<b>Information Papers</b>			
1.	SECY-98-259	11/5/98	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending October 30, 1998
<b>Memoranda</b>			
1.	M990112	1/26/99	Staff Requirements - Briefing on Decommissioning Criteria for West Valley, 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, January 12, 1999
2.	M981113	1/27/99	Staff Requirements - Meeting on NRC Response to Stakeholders' Concerns, 9:00 A.M., Friday, November 13, 1998

Commission Correspondence Released to the Public

1. Letter to Joe F. Colvin, Nuclear Energy Institute, dated January 15, 1999, concerns follow up comments to the stakeholders' meeting on November 13, 1998 (incoming dated November 25, 1998 also released).
2. Letter to John T. Conway, U.S. Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB), dated January 15, 1999, provides comments on a report to Congress on the role of the DNFSB regarding the regulation of DOE's defense nuclear facilities.
3. Letter to Congress, dated January 15, 1999, provides a copy of the NRC's letter to John Conway, DNFSB, regarding regulation of DOE's Defense Nuclear Facilities

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. ACRS Subcommittee Meeting on Thermal-Hydraulic Phenomena; Notice of Meeting on February 23, 1999
2. Advisory Committee on Medical Uses of Isotopes: Subcommittee Meeting Notices for February 23-26, 1999.

Region I  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Participation in Haddam Neck Community Decommissioning Advisory Committee (CDAC) Meeting

Region I staff attended the quarterly meeting of the Haddam Neck CDAC at the East Hampton, CT Middle School on January 19, 1999, and gave an update of the NRC regulatory oversight of the decommissioning activities at Haddam Neck. Topics discussed included the issuance of a recent quarterly inspection report and the status of enforcement concerning the reactor system decontamination effort. Questions concerned the inspection of continuing leaks of an onsite dike around storage tanks and future inspection activities.

Public Meeting Held Concerning The Decommissioning of Indian Point 1

On January 20, 1999 NRC staff held a public meeting in Peekskill, NY, to present information regarding the decommissioning regulations and inspection oversight for the Indian Point 1 reactor. The reactor was permanently shut down in 1974 and continues in a SAFSTOR condition. Region I staff explained the inspection oversight process, the regional involvement, and answered questions concerning the inspection program from the approximately 150 people in attendance.

Participation in Maine Yankee Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting

Region I staff attended the quarterly meeting of the Maine Yankee CAP in Wiscasset, ME, on January 21, 1999, and gave an update of the NRC oversight of the decommissioning activities at Maine Yankee. Topics discussed included the issuance of a recent quarterly inspection report, the denial of a Maine Yankee request to reconsider the characterization of two violations issued in October, 1998, a series of recent meetings held by the NRC staff concerning the plans for an onsite Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation, issuance of a licensing action reducing onsite and offsite indemnity requirements, and preparations for a spent fuel inspection and inventory. Inquiries from the public concerned timing of inspections and issuance of reports, NRC involvement in asbestos removal, and suggestions that NRC be more visible in the area around the plant now that the resident office has been closed.

Routine Inspection at Dept. of VA Medical Center, Philadelphia, PA

Region I staff conducted an inspection at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Philadelphia, PA, on January 20-21, 1999. The inspection focused on the licensee's implementation of corrective actions taken following previous inspections when weaknesses were identified in the oversight of the licensed program. The inspection also focused on actions implemented to effect open communications between workers and management with regard to radiation safety matters. The inspectors noted continuing improvement in these areas. Within the scope of this inspection, no violations were identified.

#### Meeting with Westinghouse Waltz Mill (PA) Staff

On Wednesday, January 20, 1999, staff from NRC Region I, NMSS and the Office of the General Counsel met with representatives from the Westinghouse Waltz Mill site and their hydrological consultant. The Westinghouse Waltz Mill site, located in southwestern Pennsylvania, is listed on the Site Decommissioning Management Plan due to soil and groundwater contamination on a portion of the site. The licensee discussed its remediation plans for the contaminated soil and solution to the groundwater issue. Because Westinghouse intends to occupy the site as a licensee and does not plan to request termination of the licensee and release of the site, the licensee plans to request that the NRC approve an alternate schedule for groundwater remediation to incorporate radiological decay. NRC staff will review the detailed submittal from the licensee upon receipt.

#### Fitzpatrick Nuclear Plant

NRC Region I conducted a special inspection at FitzPatrick during the week of January 24 to review the licensee's (New York Power Authority - NYPA) followup to the January 14, 1999 fire at an onsite hydrogen storage facility. The intentional shutdown of a 115 kV power supply line to facilitate fighting the fire resulted in declaration of an unusual event. NYPA has established three response teams to investigate this event. The main response team is a root cause analysis effort to determine the cause of the hydrogen fire. The other two teams are looking at the response of the plant to this event and at available options to create a temporary hydrogen supply to support facility operations. No findings have been made to date regarding the cause of the hydrogen leak or the ignition source for the hydrogen. In addition, on January 21, NYPA reported that the four EDGs, which were run unloaded for 3½ hours during the event while the 115 kV power line to the plant was secured, had not been left in the proper electrical configuration while running. The NRC special inspection will also review NYPA's findings regarding the risk posed by operating the EDGs in the configuration established during this fire.

Region II  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending January 29, 1999

Carolina Power and Light Company - Harris

Following a plant tour and discussion of NRC changes being implemented, the Deputy Regional Administrator presented NRC certificates to newly licensed operators at the Harris facility at an evening awards ceremony on January 28.

Duke Energy Corporation - Oconee

Representatives from Duke Energy Corporation were in the Regional Office for a predecisional enforcement conference on January 26 to discuss concerns and apparent violations associated with providing alternate emergency electrical power to the high pressure injection pumps.

Regulatory Compliance and Technology Group Workshop

On January 27, the Director, Division of Reactor Safety gave a presentation on the proposed changes to the NRC reactor inspection and assessment process to Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Managers during a national meeting in Savannah, Georgia.

Southern Nuclear Operating Company - Farley

On January 29, representatives of the Southern Nuclear Operating Company met with Regional management to discuss security-related issues at the Farley Nuclear Plant.

Tennessee Valley Authority - Sequoyah

On January 28, representatives from Tennessee Valley Authority were in the Regional Office to discuss recent plant performance at Sequoyah. The licensee discussed overall performance during 1998, several technical issues that caused plant transients, and plans for upcoming refueling outages.

Non-Destructive Testing Services (NDTS) - Immediately Effective Order

On January 27, a Region II inspector observed the licensee package and ship the six Ir-192 cameras and sources to the vendor. The NRC had issued NDTS an Order on January 15 that required, in part that by February 15 the licensee transfer all licensed material in its possession to an authorized recipient. Region II is working with EPA to resolve the final Co-60 radiography source.

Office of Congressional Affairs  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending January 29, 1999

**CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 4**

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Portner	02/04/99 406 DSOB	9:00	NRC Commission	Oversight/Authorization	Sen. Inhofe/Graham Clean Air, Wetlands, Private Property, and Nuclear Safety Environment and Public Works
Keeling	02/04/99 SD-192	10:00	Reno, Albright, Freeh	Counterterrorism Efforts	Sen. Gregg/Hollings Commerce, Justice, State and Judiciary Appropriations
Portner	02/04/99 2154 RHOB	10:00	TBD	Legislation to split OMB into two Offices	Rep.Horn/Turner Govt Mgmt, Information and Technology Government Reform
Combs	TBA	TBA	TBD	High Level Waste Program	Sen. Murkowski/Bingaman Energy and Natural Resources
Combs	TBA	TBA	TBD	High Level Waste Program	Rep. Barton/Hall Energy and Water Commerce
Keeling	02/24/99 SH-216	9:30	Chiefs of Staff of branches of the Armed Services , NRC, and possibly others	Year 2000 Threats to National Security	Sen. Inhofe/Robb Readiness Armed Services

Portner	03/16/99 2362-B RHOB	10:00	TBD	Nuclear Waste Management and Disposal	Rep. Packard/Visclosky Energy and Water Appropriations
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