

February 18, 1999

SECY 99-052

For: The Commissioners

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

Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING FEBRUARY 12, 1999

Contents

Enclosure

Nuclear Reactor Regulation	A
Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards	B
Nuclear Regulatory Research	C*
Incident Response Operations	D
General Counsel	E*
Administration	F
Chief Information Officer	G
Chief Financial Officer	H*
Human Resources	I
Small Business & Civil Rights	J*
Enforcement	K*
State Program	L*
Public Affairs	M
International Program	N
Office of the Secretary	O
Region I	P
Region II	P
Region III	P
Region IV	P
Executive Director for Operations	Q*
Congressional Affairs	R

*No input this week.

James L. Blaha
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
J. Mitchell, OEDO

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Oconee Nuclear Station Units 1, 2, and 3

On February 8, 1999, a public meeting was held at NRC headquarters with Duke Energy Corporation, NRR, and Region II personnel to discuss design and licensing issues related to the Emergency Feedwater (EFW) system. The topics discussed included such issues as documentation history of the EFW system; single failure considerations; design, operation, and failure consequences of the hotwell makeup valve from the upper head tanks; modifications that have been performed in the past related to the EFW system; EFW pump runout protection; overview of the design of the Main Feedwater, EFW, Standby Shutdown Facility Auxiliary Feedwater, and Station Service Water systems as they relate to the reliability of the EFW system; implementation of post-TMI action plan items that were designed to improve the EFW system; ability to cross-connect the EFW system between units if needed; EFW probabilistic risk assessment review; and Final Safety Analysis Report changes that are needed to clarify the design and licensing basis of the EFW system. A staff meeting is planned to discuss the information that was provided by Duke Energy.

Commonwealth Edison Company

On February 9, 1999, the staff, with the concurrence of the Commission, approved ComEd's request of January 5, 1995, to consolidate its four near-site EOFs and corporate EOF into one single central EOF. Commission approval of the staff's action was required because the central EOF is more than 20 miles from any of the ComEd sites. The distance of the central EOF from the sites varies from 32 miles (Dresden) to 116 miles (Quad Cities).

In its review, the staff concluded that the central EOF meets all of the functional as well as the physical requirements (i.e., communications, space, and visual information displays) for EOFs as identified in the NRC regulations and supporting documents. A unique situation and significant factor in the staff's decision is the fact that the state and local decision makers, which support ComEd's central EOF proposal, operate from their own emergency centers, are not sent to the near-site EOFs, and will not be sent to the central EOF. As a consequence, there will be no change in communication arrangements with the state and local governments resulting from the use of the central EOF.

Completion of this action removes 12 TACs from the list of actions greater than three (3) years old.

Management Changes

Doug Lindsey has been named Plant Manager at Fitzpatrick, reporting to the Site Executive Officer, Mike Colomb. Lindsey was previously assigned as General Manager, Operations. No replacement has yet been named to Lindsey's former position.

In addition, Jack Maurer has been detailed to the site Year 2000 project. The Licensing Manager, Art Zaremba, has been named Acting General Manager of Support Services, replacing

Maurer. Bob Steigerwald has been named Acting Licensing Manager.

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) announced on February 5, 1999, that Mr. Nick Kazanas, General Manager of the Bellefonte Nuclear Plant, will assume the additional duties of General Manager of Nuclear Assurance in the TVA corporate offices, effective March 12, 1999.

Mr. Kazanas will succeed Mr. Raul Baron, who has been named General Manager of Process Methods and Process Improvements for TVA's Chief Operating Officer organization.

Mr. Kazanas has over 30 years experience in the nuclear industry including the quality assurance area, involvement in three successful major recovery programs, two construction projects, and four operating plants.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Meeting with British Nuclear Fuels, Limited, Fuel Solutions

On February 9, 1999, a meeting was held between the Spent Fuel Project Office and British Nuclear Fuels, Limited, Fuel Solutions (BFS) to discuss the BFS TranStor Shipping Cask application. Specifically discussed were the status of BFS's response to staff's second request for additional information concerning the application and the cask's impact limiter design, planned testing, and test schedule.

Meeting with Sacramento Municipal Utility District on Rancho Seco Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation

On February 9, 1999, members of the Spent Fuel Project Office met with Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) representatives to discuss the current status and schedules for the Rancho Seco independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI). SMUD discussed their projected schedule and milestones for obtaining a 10 CFR Part 72 license, as outlined in their letter dated January 28, 1999, which transmitted Revision 2 to the Safety Analysis Report (SAR) for the ISFSI. The staff identified the need for additional information before its acceptance review of the revised SAR could be completed and a final review schedule could be established. As a result, SMUD agreed to submit documentation identifying and justifying all deviations from NUREG-1536, the Standard Review Plan for Dry Cask Storage Systems, and a cross reference of the applicant's responses to the staff's requests for additional information to the corresponding sections of the revised SAR.

Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant Augmented Inspection Team Exit

An Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) was dispatched on December 9, 1998, to investigate a cascade fire at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant. The fire, which directly affected one cell in the cascade, occurred on December 9, 1998, and lasted approximately two hours. The AIT exit meeting, which was open to public observation, was conducted on February 5, 1999, to discuss the team's findings. The exit meeting, which was attended by about 100 persons (the majority were plant employees) and included members of the public, the local news media and one Columbus, Ohio, television station, was held at the Ohio State University Agriculture Research Station located near the plant in Piketon, Ohio. The AIT agreed with the U.S. Enrichment Corporation's (USEC) determination that the fire was likely the result of a high-temperature aluminum/uranium hexafluoride reaction within the affected cascade cell. The AIT determined that the plant's emergency response was adequate to protect public health and safety. However, weaknesses were noted in pre-fire planning, operator and fire fighter training, procedures, and particularly in the plant's failure to declare an Alert emergency classification. The AIT also noted some weaknesses in the comprehensiveness of the plant's responses during the accident recovery phase, such as failure to station a full-time fire watch while the sprinkler system was inoperable and lube oil was still spread out on the floor. USEC agreed with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) findings. Members of the media interviewed several NRC staff after the meeting.

Incident Response Operations
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS:

1. PNO-II-99-007, Allied Technology Group, RESIN SPILL FROM RUPTURED ELBOW LINE
2. PNO-III-99-006, Research Medical Center, THERAPEUTIC MISADMINISTRATION-
UNDERDOSE
3. PNO-IV-99-012, Providence Medical Center, MISADMINISTRATION INVOLVING AN
INTRAVASCULAR BRACHYTHERAPY TREATMENT

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Garage Repair Project

Final arrangements were made to perform the last construction phase of the garage repair project over the Presidents Day Weekend. Punch list items will be performed February 16-21, 1999, completing the project.

Potential Liability of Non-Operating Co-Owners of Nuclear Power Plants

David L. Meyer and P. Michael Harrison, ADM, along with Stephen H. Lewis, OGC, Brian Richter, and Bob Woods, NRR, met with Jeff Shields, General Manager, and Catherine Schacht, Board Member, Emerald People's Utility District, Eugene, Oregon, to discuss issues related to the petition for rulemaking submitted by the Atlantic City Electric Company, et al, (PRM-50-64). This petition relates to the potential liability of non-operating co-owners of nuclear power plants. It specifically requests that the NRC amend its regulations in 10 CFR Part 50 pertaining to enforcement to clarify NRC policy regarding potential liability of joint owners if other owners become financially incapable of bearing their share of the burden for safe operation or decommissioning of the nuclear power plant.

Shutdown and Low-Power Operations for Nuclear Power Plants (Part 50)

A document withdrawing a proposed rule that would have required licensees to ensure that certain safety functions were maintained during shutdown and low-power operations was published in the Federal Register on February 4, 1999 (64 FR 5623).

Medical Use of Byproduct Material; Workshop (Part 35)

A document announcing a public workshop concerning certain aspects of the Commission's proposed revision of the regulations concerning the medical use of byproduct material was published in the Federal Register on February 5, 1999 (64 FR 5721). The workshop concerns the Commission's solicitation of specific information on the implementation issues associated with the proposed revisions to the training and experience requirements. The workshop will be held February 17 and 18, 1999.

Policy and Procedure for NRC Enforcement Actions; Revised Treatment of Severity Level IV Violations at Power Reactors

A document amending the NRC's Enforcement Policy (NUREG-1600) was published in the Federal Register on February 9, 1999 (64 FR 6388). This action revises the treatment of Severity Level IV violations at nuclear power plants by expanding the use of Non-Cited Violations to include Severity Level IV violations identified by the NRC; providing that, under most circumstances, Severity Level IV violations will result in Non-Cited Violations and not in Notices of Violation; and permitting NRC closure of most Severity Level IV violations based on their inclusion in a licensee corrective action program. This action becomes effective March 11, 1999.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of
February 5, 1999 through February 11, 1999:

Contract, NRC-26-94-261. (FOIA/PA 99-116)

Millstone, monitoring of radionuclide releases into environment. (FOIA/PA 99-117)

Year 2000, correspondence, test results and schedules covering NRC licensees as well as any internal systems affecting functioning of licensees. (FOIA/PA 99-118)

New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology, depleted uranium license, 1972 through 1978.
(FOIA/PA 99-119)

NRC organizational listing. (FOIA/PA 99-120)

Named individual, OI case no. 1-97-027 identified exhibits. (FOIA/PA 99-121)

Self, performance, rotational assignments (1989-1997), and ACRS/ACNW reorganization impact. (FOIA/PA 99-122)

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Arrivals		
RAYLAND, Andrew	PHYSICAL PROTECTION SPECIALIST	NMSS

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Media Interest

Region II reported high media interest in the proposed license amendment by Shearon Harris to increase its spent fuel pool capacity.

The Cleveland Plain Dealer has reported on the alleged intimidation of an employee at the Perry nuclear plant.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
99-23	NRC Completes Work on Preparing its Internal Computer Systems for Year 2000 Readiness
99-24	NRC to Hold Informal Public Hearing on Petitions Concerning River Bend, Perry Nuclear Power Plants
99-25	Note to Editors: ACNW reports available
Regions:	
I-99-12	NRC Commissioners Dicus and Merrifield to Visit Millstone on February 12
I-99-13	NRC Issues Confirmatory Order to Special Testing Laboratories, Allowing Resumption of Licensed Activities
II-99-07	NRC Asks for Comments on Decommissioning of Georgia Tech Research Reactor

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Memorandum of Cooperation with the South African Department of Minerals and Energy

The staff is working to finalize arrangements for Chairman Jackson to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) with the South African Department of Minerals and Energy (DME) during her participation in the meeting of the Sustainable Energy Committee of the U.S.-South African Binational (Gore-Mbeki) Commission in Cape Town February 17-18. The MOC will formalize the contacts in the broad programmatic areas of nuclear safety, safeguards, and physical security which have taken place between NRC and the DME during the twice-yearly meetings of the Binational Commission. It completes an action item which has been under consideration since the first meeting of the Binational Commission, as reported to the Commission last year (memo dated 2/17/98).

Subgroup on Nuclear Export Coordination

The Subgroup on Nuclear Export Coordination (SNEC), an interagency committee chaired by the Department of State which primarily reviews applications involving items controlled for nuclear non-proliferation reasons, met on Friday, February 12, 1999. Discussions focused on 15 Department of Commerce dual-use cases involving exports to India, China and Israel; application of the U.S. sanctions policy with respect to India, and a Congressional initiative to pass an Export Administration Act.

Year 2000 Issues for Safeguards and Physical Protection

From February 1-5, Clarence Breskovic of the Office of International Programs (OIP) participated in a seminar on Year 2000 Issues for International Safeguards and Physical Protection, sponsored by the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria. The seminar was attended by 47 countries and EURATOM. Its main purpose was to provide an information exchange forum on Y2K remediation programs in the areas of material control and accounting, reporting, and physical protection. Presentations were made by 24 countries, EURATOM, and the nuclear and computer industries. The NRC presentation focused on progress of the NRC's Y2K program on safeguards and physical protection and Y2K contingency planning and was created jointly by NMSS and OIP.

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Documents Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SECY-98-266	11/13/98	Final Rule -- Requirements for Initial Operator Licensing Examinations
M990209B / SRM on 98-266	2/9/99	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-266	2/9/99	(same)
2. SECY-77-141	3/11/77	Proposed Rule to Require Licensee Safeguards Contingency Plans
Correction Notice to SECY-77-141	4/7/77	(same)
3. SECY-77-141A	4/21/77	Safeguards Contingency Plans (SECY-77-141)
4. SECY-77-141B	12/15/77	Safeguards Contingency Plans for Nuclear Reactors, Fuel Cycle Facilities and for Certain Quantities of Special Nuclear Material in Transit; Amendments to 10 CFR Parts 50, 70, and 73
5. SECY-98-132	6/9/98	Plans to Increase Performance-Based Approaches in Regulatory Activities (WITS - 9700093)
SRM on 98-132	2/11/99	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-132	2/11/99	(same)
Information Papers		
1. SECY-99-025	1/25/99	Guidance to Terminate Agreement State Uranium Recovery Licenses Under Requirements of 10 CFR 150.15a(a) and Section 274c
2. SECY-99-027	1/28/99	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending January 22, 1999

3.	SECY-99-028	1/27/99	Rulemaking Process in Response to the Staff Requirements Memorandum for SECY-98-028, "Regulatory Options for Setting Standards on Clearance of Materials and Equipment Having Residual Radioactivity"
4.	SECY-99-030	1/29/99	Annual Report on Court Litigation (Calendar Year 1998)
5.	SECY-99-031	1/28/99	Agreement Between U.S. Department of Energy/Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management and U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission/Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards Regarding Pre-Licensing Interactions
Memoranda			
1.	M990120B	2/11/99	Staff Requirements - Briefing on Reactor Inspection, Enforcement and Assessment, Wednesday, January 20, 1999
2.	M990211A	2/11/99	Staff Requirements - Affirmation Session, Thursday, February 11, 1999: I. SECY-99-044 - General Public Utilities Corporation (Three Mile Island Nuclear Station, Unit 1), Docket No. 50-289; II. SECY-99-045 - Hydro Resources - Intervenors' Petition to Review Presiding Officer's February 4, 1999 Memorandum and Order (Procedural Issues)

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Congress, dated February 1, 1999, provides a summary of actions taken by NRC in response to recommendations concerning the NRC which were in reports issued by the GAO.
2. Letter to State Governors, dated February 3, 1999, requests continued participation in the NRC's State Liaison Officer program.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Atlas Corporation; Docket No. 40-3453-MLA-3; Designation of Presiding Officer (Thomas S. Moore).
2. 10 CFR Parts 2, 19, 20, 21, 30, 40, 51, 60, 61, and 63; Disposal of High-Level Radioactive Wastes in a Proposed Geologic Repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada; Proposed Rule.

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Peach Bottom Unit 2: Loss of Plant Monitoring System Computers During Y2K Testing

On February 8, 1999, while performing testing for a Y2K remediation modification to the Unit 2 rod worth minimizer (RWM) system, operators experienced a lock-up of both the primary and backup plant monitoring system (PMS) computers. As a result, operators also lost the following PMS-supported systems for about seven hours: safety parameter display system (SPDS), emergency response data system (ERDS), and 3D Monicore thermal limit monitoring system. Engineers had taken the backup PMS computer off-line and had advanced the PMS clock to a year 2000 date. This led to a lockup of the backup PMS, and the system transferred to the primary, on-line PMS computer. The engineers did not recognize that the system had transferred and, believing that the original command was not accepted, again advanced the system clock, causing the primary PMS to lock up also. Several initial attempts to restore the PMS computers were unsuccessful, and operators determined that this constituted a major loss of emergency assessment capability. The PMS computers are not Y2K compliant, but the engineers believed that this would not impact the testing. Operators did not expect the testing would affect the on-line PMS computer. However, before the testing began, operators took contingency actions to lower Unit 2 power slightly to ensure shift average power levels were not exceeded. The licensee plans to perform a full root cause analysis of this event.

SteriGenics, International

On February 6, 7, and 9, 1999, an inspector from the DNMS staff inspected SteriGenics International's newly constructed and licensed wet-source-storage gamma irradiator facility, in Somerset, NJ. The inspector observed the licensee unload 4 of the 8 shipping casks received from Nordion, the cobalt-60 supplier. Each cask contained between 179,400 and 198,999 curies of cobalt-60. On February 7, 1999, the inspector observed the licensee load cobalt-60 sources into the source racks located at the bottom of the storage pool. After the loading was complete, the inspector performed radiation surveys in several locations on or near the exterior surface of the cell, and observed the licensee perform such surveys in other locations. The licensee plans to perform about two weeks of dose distribution studies prior to irradiating product. The licensee will inform the NRC in writing prior to irradiating product.

Millstone Unit 1 Decommissioning Public Meeting

A public meeting was held at the Waterford (CT) Town Hall February 9, 1999, to discuss the regulatory process for the decommissioning of Millstone Unit 1. About 100 people attended the evening meeting, chaired by Mr. Tony Sheridan, First Selectman for Waterford. NRC presentations were made by Mr. Duke Wheeler, NRR project manager, and Dr. Ronald Bellamy, Decommissioning and Laboratory Branch Chief, Region I. Mr. Wheeler explained the decommissioning submittals required and the associated NRC actions, and Dr. Bellamy explained the ongoing inspection process and activities.

Millstone Unit 1 submitted its shutdown letter July 21, 1998. The licensee indicated at the meeting that it has not yet decided whether to pursue DECON or SAFSTOR options; a decision is expected

second quarter 1999, and the submittal of the Post-Shutdown Decommissioning Activities Report is expected third quarter 1999. A public meeting will be held shortly thereafter.

Public comments concerned the decommissioning rule and the lack of any opportunity for a public hearing until the end of decommissioning, a request that the NRC mandate SAFSTOR for all decommissioning reactors, the lack of a federal repository for spent fuel, and questions about the NRC unrestricted use release criteria.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Duke Power Company - Meeting on Oconee Emergency Feedwater (EFW) System

On February 8, 1999, Region II and NRR managers and staff participated in a public meeting in Headquarters with Duke Power Company representatives to discuss licensing and design issues related to the Emergency Feedwater (EFW) System at Oconee. The information shared during the meeting resulted in a clearer understanding of the EFW system licensing basis and will facilitate the resolution of questions regarding the ability of the system to handle secondary pipe breaks.

Southern Company Meeting - Farley, Hatch and Vogtle

On February 10, 1999, the Regional Administrator and Region II managers participated in an Information Meeting at the Southern Company's headquarters office in Birmingham, Alabama to discuss licensee performance, new initiatives, and other regulatory issues pertaining to the Farley, Hatch and Vogtle facilities.

Region III
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Management Meeting with ABB Combustion Engineering, Inc.

On February 9, 1999, a management meeting was conducted in the Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, between management representatives from ABB Combustion Engineering, Inc., and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on a recent inspection at the Hematite Nuclear Manufacturing facility in Hematite, Missouri, on CE assessment of lapel air samples.

Management Meeting with Wisconsin Public Service Corporation - Kewaunee

On February 10, 1999, a management meeting was conducted in the NRC Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, between management representatives from Wisconsin Public Service Corporation and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on the current performance of the Kewaunee Nuclear Power Station. The utility discussed the recent operator errors and its corrective action processes. Also discussed at the meeting was the utility's engineering support in resolving design issues and the effectiveness of its Quality Assurance Program.

Management Meeting with American Electric Power Company - D. C. Cook

On February 11, 1999, a management meeting was conducted at NRC Headquarters, Rockville, Maryland, between management representatives from American Electric Power Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on the Expanded System Readiness Reviews the utility is undertaking for its D. C. Cook Nuclear Power Station. The reviews are being conducted to address the engineering weaknesses identified by the utility and the NRC. The utility began the reviews on February 10, 1999, and current plans are to complete the reviews by late May 1999. The utility also discussed that a new integrated restart schedule for the plant will be published by June 1, 1999. The restart schedule will include the work scope needed to correct any deficiencies identified as a result of the reviews.

Commonwealth Edison Company Management Changes Announced - Byron

On February 16, 1999, Commonwealth Edison Company announced that Kenneth L. Graesser, ComEd's site vice president for its Byron Nuclear Power Station, will retire in July 1999. The company will promote station manager Bill Levis to the site vice president position, and Richard Lopriore will join the company March 15, 1999, as the new station manager. Lopriore comes to Byron from Ontario Hydro, where he was assistant vice president for Pickering units 5 through 8 and a senior advisor for operations and maintenance.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending February 12, 1999

Meeting with Louisiana Radiation Protection Division

The Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, the Regional State Agreements Officers and a representative from the Office of State Programs met with the Administrator of the Louisiana Radiation Protection Division and members of his staff in the State's Baton Rouge, Louisiana offices. This was a routine periodic meeting with the State to help both parties to remain knowledgeable of their respective programs and conduct planning for the State's next Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation review.

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending February 12, 1999

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 6

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Combs	TBA	TBA	TBD	High Level Waste Program	Sen. Murkowski/Bingaman Energy and Natural Resources
Keeling	02/24 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
Gerke	03/09 2318 RHOB	12:30	TBD	Impact of Y2K Computer Problem Litigation	Rep. Morella/Barcia Technology Science Rep. Horn/Turner Government Management & Information Tech Government Reform
Portner	03/16 2362-B RHOB	10:00	DOE	Nuclear Waste Management and Disposal	Rep. Packard/Visclosky Energy and Water Appropriations

The Senate is in recess until Monday, February 22
 The House is in recess until Tuesday, February 23