

August 5, 1999

SECY 99-206

For: The Commissioners
From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
/s/
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING JULY 30, 1999

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*No input this week.

James L. Blaha
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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Transition Task Force Activities (TTF)

Request for public comment on the pilot program for the new regulatory oversight program has been published in the Federal Register. The comment period expires on November 30, 1999.

The Pilot Program Evaluation Panel (PPEP), a cross-disciplinary group, consisting of 12 representatives from NRC, Nuclear Energy Institute, pilot plant licensees, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and the State of Illinois conducted its first meeting on July 28, 1999. The objective of the PPEP is to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the new regulatory oversight processes. The PPEP will evaluate the pilot program results against pre-established pilot program success criteria. The results of PPEP meetings will be recorded in a meeting summary placed in the public document room. The PPEP is chaired by the Deputy Director of the Division of Inspection Program Management, Frank Gillespie.

Indian Point 2

Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. (Con Edison) announced the appointment of John Groth as senior vice president, nuclear operations and chief nuclear officer on Tuesday, July 27, 1999. He assumed the duties of Neil S. "Buzz" Carns, who recently retired.

Groth has served as vice president of nuclear generation at South Texas Project. Prior to joining the South Texas Project, he was vice president at INPO's Analysis Division. Earlier in his career, he held several positions in the U.S. Navy Nuclear Propulsion Program.

Millstone

On July 27, 1999, the Final Director's Decision (DD-99-09) was issued for issues raised in an August 21, 1995, as supplemented on August 28, 1995, 10 CFR 2.206 petition request based on concerns with the refueling practices at Millstone Unit 1. The August 28, 1995, supplement raised similar concerns with refueling practices at Millstone Units 2 and 3, and Seabrook. A partial Director's Decision had previously been issued on December 26, 1996 (DD-96-23) documenting the NRC's decision on the full core offload practices at Millstone Units 1, 2, and 3, and Seabrook.

Trojan ISFSI Cask Unloading

On July 22, 1999, Portland General Electric (PGE) staff offloaded the eight fuel assemblies that had been previously loaded into the first PWR fuel basket and cask. It would have been the first PWR basket and storage cask to be transferred to the ISFSI. PGE will inspect the PWR basket internals to the extent practicable to determine the extent of corrosion on uncoated areas of the carbon steel internals and at the carbon steel to stainless steel interfaces.

The results of the inspection will be submitted to the NRC's Spent Fuel Project Office (SFPO) as part of a license amendment package which will also address the use of less than 100% coated

carbon steel internals and NRC Bulletin 96-04 " Chemical, Galvanic, or Other Reactions in Spent Fuel Storage and Transportation Casks." PGE will not load any additional fuel into PWR baskets until the SFPO approves the license amendment.

July 30, 1999

ENCLOSURE A

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

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

On July 28, 1999, Spent Fuel Project Office staff met with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) representatives to discuss the staff's request for additional information (RAI) issued on July 21, 1999, regarding the proposed Rancho Seco Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI). Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff emphasized the need for SMUD to be clear, complete, and timely in their responses to the RAI, in order to support the 10 CFR Part 72 license application and planned placement of the Rancho Seco spent fuel in the ISFSI in December 1999. The staff and SMUD discussed each question in the RAI to reach an understanding of the information needed by the staff to complete its review of the application. SMUD agreed to provide the responses to the RAI by September 10, 1999, consistent with the schedule that the staff developed for the license review. The staff and SMUD agreed to continue to communicate frequently to resolve any remaining issues and plan to meet again to address the proposed technical specifications for the ISFSI.

Meeting with BNFL Fuel Solutions and Consumers Energy

On July 27, 1999, the Spent Fuel Project Office (SFPO) met with BNFL Fuel Solutions (BFS) and Consumers Energy. BFS opened the meeting with a discussion of the status of the BFS integration effort of Westinghouse and BNFL, a process they consider complete. They discussed their product line integration of Wesflex and TranStor products. The BFS technology plan for Consumers Energy was discussed and includes both the Wesflex and TranStor canisters. Consumers Energy then covered the Big Rock Point Dry Fuel Storage issues including the storage system, wet loading of fuel in the pool, the independent spent fuel storage installation location, and a safety analysis report supplement. BFS concluded the meeting with an overview of the Wesflex system and a discussion of the status of the Wesflex request for additional information #1 review. BFS committed to send SFPO a letter outlining their product integration and proposed schedule.

Topical Meeting at Hanford

On July 27, 1999, Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards staff participated in a topical meeting at Hanford in Richland, Washington, on "Test Plans for Technology under Development." At this meeting, which is one of a series of monthly topical meetings being held between the Department of Energy's Regulatory Unit (DOE-RU) and a DOE contractor, BNFL Inc., participants discussed the status and plans of BNFL Inc.'s testing program for vitrification, ion exchange, strontium/transuranic removal, sulfate management, and corrosion mitigation for DOE's Hanford tank waste remediation system privatization project. The meeting indicated that progress is being made in the vitrification and ion exchange areas, but work remains in the problem definition stage for the other three areas. A contractor to the DOE Richland Laboratory Operations Manager was also present.

Generally Licensed Devices Workshop

On July 27-28, 1999, staff members from the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety, and representatives from the Office of Enforcement and Office of State Programs met with representatives from nine Agreement States at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Headquarters to discuss current issues with generally licensed devices. The participants concentrated on three subject areas: (1) the current proposed rule for registration of general licensees and devices; (2) general license registration program issues; and (3) the Seaman Nuclear application to generally license a new portable moisture density gauge. Information developed during the workshop will be considered during finalization of the rule and in the NRC review of the Seaman Nuclear application.

Withdrawal of License Application, Reno Creek In-Situ Leach Uranium Extraction Project

The Division of Waste Management (DWM) received a letter, dated July 22, 1999, from the International Uranium Corporation (IUC) requesting the immediate termination of all review on the Reno Creek in-situ leach uranium extraction licensing action. IUC has decided not to support continuation of this licensing action under the current depressed uranium market conditions. On July 29, 1999, DWM sent IUC a letter indicating that it considered their request a withdrawal of the Reno Creek in-situ leach license application. In accordance with 10 CFR 2.107(c), a notice of withdrawal will be published in the Federal Register.

Staff Approves Alternate Feed Amendment for White Mesa Uranium Mill

On July 28, 1999, the staff approved an amendment to the International Uranium Corporation's White Mesa uranium mill license, authorizing the company to receive and process uranium bearing material from the St. Louis, Missouri, Formerly Utilized Site Remedial Action Plan (FUSRAP) site. The company intends to recover uranium from the material, estimated to be as much as one million pounds, and dispose of the process tailings in the facility's impoundment. The company has also been authorized to process similar material from the Ashland 1 and 2 FUSRAP sites.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

EPIX Reporting Requirements Subcommittee Meeting

INPO's Equipment Performance and Information Exchange (EPIX) System is the industry's single, common reporting system for performance indicators and equipment failure information. The EPIX Reporting Requirements Subcommittee Meeting met at INPO headquarters, July 19-22, 1999, to develop the design specifications, definitions, and requirements to implement EPIX as the single, common reporting system. NRC was represented by Steve Mays, RES, Bennett Brady, RES, Don Hickman, NRR, and J. D. Wilcox, NRR. At the meeting, NRC presented proposals for enhancements needed in EPIX to meet the data needs for the current performance indicators for the NRC reactor inspection and oversight program, maintenance rule monitoring, and the future risk-based performance indicators. The Subcommittee proposed reporting all unavailability (planned, unplanned, and fault exposure time) for all maintenance rule high safety significant systems and is considering the NRC proposal for a categorization of the types of component demands needed for computing component reliability. The Subcommittee's proposals will be presented to INPO for approval and then to NEI.

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Warehouse

The release of 10,000 square feet of space at the NRC Warehouse remains on schedule. The required modifications, by the lessor, will be completed to allow NRC to vacate the space effective July 31, 1999.

Government in the Sunshine Act Regulations (Part 9)

A document announcing that the Commission has decided to proceed with the implementation of previously promulgated regulations applying the Government in the Sunshine Act was published in the Federal Register on July 22, 1999 (64 FR 39393). The Commission will begin holding non-Sunshine Act discussions no sooner than August 23, 1999.

Reporting Requirements for Nuclear Power Reactors; Meeting (Part 50)

A document announcing a public meeting on a proposed rule that would modify event reporting requirements for nuclear power reactors was published in the Federal Register on July 22, 1999 (64 FR 39447). The meeting will be held August 3 and 4, 1999.

Requirements for Certain Generally Licensed Industrial Devices Containing Byproduct Material (Parts 30, 31, 32, 170, and 171)

A proposed rule that would amend the regulations that govern the use of byproduct material in certain measuring, gauging, or controlling devices was published in the Federal Register on July 26, 1999 (64 FR 40295). The proposed rule would add explicit requirements for a registration process that would be initiated through another rulemaking, would add a registration fee, would clarify which provisions of the regulations would apply to all general licensees, and would modify the reporting, recordkeeping, and labeling requirements for specific licensees that distribute the generally licensed devices. The comment period for the proposed rule closes October 12, 1999.

Public Comment on the Pilot Program for the New Regulatory Oversight Program

A document that requests public comment on the pilot program for the new regulatory oversight program for overseeing the safety performance of commercial nuclear power plants was published in the Federal Register on July 26, 1999 (64 FR 40394). As part of the proposal for integrating the inspection, assessment, and enforcement process, the NRC staff established a new regulatory oversight framework with a set of performance indicators and associated thresholds, developed a new baseline inspection program that supplements and verifies the performance indicators, and created a continuous assessment process that includes a method for consistently determines the appropriate regulatory actions in response to varying levels of safety performance. The NRC has begun a six-month pilot program to test this process and determine what changes or adjustments may be needed. The comment period expires November 30, 1999.

Chromalloy Tallahassee, a Division of Chromalloy Gas Turbine Corporation; Denial of Petition for Rulemaking (PRM-40-26)

A document denying a petition for rulemaking submitted by Chromalloy Tallahassee, a division of Chromalloy Gas Turbine Corporation, was published in the Federal Register on July 28, 1999 (64 FR 40784). The petitioner requested that the Commission amend its regulations concerning the exemption from licensing of source material so that the exemption would include finished parts containing nickel-thoria alloy from both aircraft and battle tank engines. The NRC denied this petition because (1) no benefits from granting the petition could be identified, (2) the petitioner is able to perform overhauls and repairs of the specified engines as a general licensee provided two possession limits are observed, and (3) the petitioner subsequently indicated that it had no plans to begin these repairs in the near future.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of
July 23, 1999 through July 29, 1999:

FOIA listing for calendar 1998. (FOIA/PA 99-299)

Envirocare, harassment allegations. (FOIA/PA 99-300)

Materials licenses in specific South Carolina zip codes and documents related to radioactive releases into sewer systems. (FOIA/PA 99-301)

Audiovisual productions at NRC, listing of promotional and/or training items currently used, no longer used, or planned for use within 2 years. (FOIA/PA 99-302)

Materials licenses in specific Hawaii zip codes and documents related to radioactive releases into sewer systems. (FOIA/PA 99-303)

Westinghouse Electric Co., Blairsville, PA facility, all records 1990 to present. (FOIA/PA 99-304)

Self, radiation exposure. (FOIA/PA 99-305)

Office of Human Resources
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending July 30, 1999

Arrivals		
COADY, Irene	BUDGET ANALYST	OCFO
PACE, Lisa	CRIMINAL INVESTIGATOR	OIG
SCHNEIDER, Stephen	PROJECT ENGINEER	RIV
SHAH, Mahendra	STRUCTURAL ENGINEER	NMSS
Retirements		
BENSON, Melissa	PARALEGAL ASSISTANT	ASLBP
BRAMMER, Herbert	SENIOR MECHANICAL ENGINEER	NRR
BROWN, Charles	REACTOR ENGINEER	RIII
SCHECHTER, Hans	SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER	IP
THOMAS, Cecil	PROJECT DIRECTOR	NRR
Departures		
FRANKLIN, Dwana	SUMMER CLERICAL	RIII
JANIFER, Debra	SECRETARY (OA)	NRR
THOMAS, Kristine	PROJECT MANAGER	NRR
WILLS, Dorothy	SECRETARY (OA)	NRR

Office of Small Business & Civil Rights
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

U.S. Office of Personnel Management Director's Award Ceremony for Outstanding Alternative Dispute Resolution

Marva Gary, Civil Rights Program Manager, SBCR, attended the U.S. Office of Personnel Management Director's Award Ceremony for Outstanding Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Programs. The program honored Federal Government agencies that have implemented ADR programs to resolve work place disputes in a more efficient and effective manner. The Office of personnel management provided each attendee a copy of their publication, "Alternative Dispute Resolution: A Resource Guide." The Guide provides descriptions of various ADR techniques, summaries of workplace ADR programs, and sources of ADR training and assistance. The Guide will be an excellent resource as we develop an ADR program for resolving discrimination complaints filed against the Agency. Honorable Janet Reno, U.S. Attorney General, a strong supporter of ADR, was the keynote speaker. She is a strong supporter of ADR and encouraged attendees to continue to support the use and implementation of ADR to resolve workplace disputes.

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Media Interest

Chairman Dicus conducted her first media interview with Inside NRC.

The Engineering News Record is preparing a story on the shipment of the Trojan reactor vessel and internals to the Hanford site.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
99-157	Note to Editors: Meeting Postponed
99-158	Note to Editors: ACRS Meeting
99-159	NRC Completes Review of Millstone Public Petition
99-160	NRC Proposes to Amend Requirements for One Spent Fuel Storage Cask Design
99-161	Note to Editors: ACRS Reports
99-162	NRC Considers Changes to Regulations for Special Nuclear Material Licensees

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on Economic and Technological Cooperation

On July 27, 1999, Vice President Gore and Russian Prime Minister Stepashin convened an executive session of the U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on Economic and Technological Cooperation. As part of the preparations for that meeting, on July 26, 1999, Chairman Dicus, accompanied by Office of International Programs Director Janice Dunn Lee, participated in a meeting with Secretary of Energy Richardson and Russian Minister of Atomic Energy Adamov to discuss a variety of nuclear cooperation issues. The principals discussed issues such as the status of the government-to-government Materials Protection, Control and Accounting Agreement; nuclear safety and Year 2000 computer problems; the Russian proposal to store other countries' spent fuel; and the decommissioning of general purpose attack nuclear submarines. As reported in the Joint Statement issued by the Vice President and Prime Minister, both countries "reaffirmed the vital importance of joint additional efforts to prevent the transfer of sensitive materials and technology;" "noted recent progress by the Russian government to strengthen the policy, legal and institutional foundations of Russia's export control system;" and agreed to "broaden nuclear cooperation under the aegis of the Commission's new Nuclear Committee."

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. Commission Voting Record on SECY-99-006	7/22/99	Re-Examination of the NRC Hearing Process
2. SRM on 99-006	7/22/99	(same)
3. SECY-99-158	6/18/99	Final Rule: "Certification Renewal and Amendment Processes," 10 CFR Part 76
M990729A (Affirmation SRM on 99-158)	7/29/99	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 99-158	7/29/99	(same)
4. SECY-99-183	7/14/99	Proposed Rule: "Elimination of the Requirement for Noncombustible Fire Barrier Penetration Seal Materials and Other Minor Changes" (10 CFR part 50) (WITS 199800128)
SRM on 99-183	7/29/99	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 99-183	7/29/99	(same)
Information Papers		
1. SECY-99-180	7/9/99	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending July 2, 1999
1. SECY-99-182	7/9/99	Assessment of the Impact of Appendix R Fire Protection Exemptions on Fire Risk
2. SECY-99-188	7/21/99	Evaluation and Proposed Revision of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Facility Safety Inspection Program
Memoranda		
1. M990713	7/28/99	Staff Requirements - Briefing on Treatment of Existing Programs for License Renewal, Tuesday, July 13, 1999

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to James P. Riccio, dated July 23, 1999, concerns release of preliminary Commission papers to the Nuclear Energy Institute for comment.
2. Letter to Congressman Edward J. Markey, dated July 19, 1999, concerns Commission's recent decision to implement its 1985 change in its rules regarding the Government in the Sunshine Act.
3. Letter to Dr. Dana Powers, Chairman, ACRS, dated July 16, 1999, concerns the role of defense in depth in a risk-informed regulatory system.
4. Letter to Abigail C. Johnson, Nuclear Waste Advisor, Eureka County, dated July 16, 1999, concerns proposed rule that would amend the NRC environmental review requirements for the renewal of nuclear power plant operating licenses (10 CFR Part 51).
5. Letter to Administrator Daniel S. Goldin of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, dated July 15, 1999, concerns request for a technical advisor to the Interagency Nuclear Safety Review Panel being formed to review the safety analysis of NASA's Mars Surveyor 2001 mission.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. 10 CFR Part 70; Domestic Licensing of Special Nuclear Material; Possession of a Critical Mass of Special Nuclear Material; Proposed Rule
2. [NUREG-1600, Revision 1] Policy and Procedure for NRC Enforcement Actions; Interim Enforcement Policy Regarding Enforcement Discretion for Nuclear Power Plants During the Year 2000 Transition
3. Sequoyah Fuels Corporation; Docket No. 40-8027-MLA-4; Designation of Presiding Officer (Charles Bechhoefer)

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Beaver Valley

On July 23, 1999, Duquesne Light Company (DLC) announced a reorganization of senior managers. Effective July 25, Mr. Lew W. Myers will assume the newly created position of Executive Vice President (VP) reporting to Mr. James E. Cross, President, Generation Group and Chief Nuclear Officer. Mr. Kevin L. Ostrowski, Division VP, Nuclear Operations Group and Plant Manager will now report to Mr. Myers. Mr. Myers also retains the title of Senior VP of the First Energy Nuclear Operating Company, which has negotiated to acquire Beaver Valley Units 1 & 2 through an asset transfer expected to conclude by December 1999. Mr. Myers previously served in senior nuclear management positions, including VP of the Perry Nuclear Power Plant and Plant Manager at South Texas Project Unit 1.

Commissioner Merrifield Visit to Georgetown University Medical Center

On July 22, 1999, the Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, Region I accompanied Commissioner Merrifield, and a member of his staff, on a visit to the medical diagnosis, therapy and research programs at Georgetown University Medical Center. The visit included observations of licensed activities at research laboratories, the nuclear medicine and radiation medicine departments, and waste storage and handling facilities. In addition, the Commissioner met with administrators and staff to discuss the program at Georgetown and the impact of NRC regulatory policies on it.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Tennessee Valley Authority - Browns Ferry

Representatives from Tennessee Valley Authority's Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant met with Region II managers on July 26 to discuss Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant's engineering status and performance.

Duke Energy Corporation - Oconee

A Region II inspection team, with support from NRR and Region I, completed the inspection of the Aging Management Program at Oconee. The Deputy Director, Division of Reactor Safety, participated in the preliminary exit meeting with the licensee on July 30, 1999.

Representatives from Duke Energy Corporation were in the Regional Office on July 30 to attend a management meeting concerning the status of open emergency feedwater inspection items and engineering initiatives for the Oconee facility.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending July 30, 1999

Public Workshop to Discuss Risk-Informed Initiatives and Topics

Region IV sponsored a workshop, open to public observation, to discuss risk-informed initiatives and related topics. This public meeting was held in the Region IV office on July 20 and 21, 1999. Presenters included NRC management and staff, representatives from Region IV facilities and a contractor manager (representing NASA) responsible for shuttle risk and reliability analysis. In addition to a number of specific presentations, there was an open round table discussion that included presentation follow up questions.

Visitors from Ukraine Visit Palo Verde

On July 23, 1999, Mr. Volodymyr Bezsalyy, Head of the Division of Nuclear Safety, State Nuclear Regulatory Administration of Ukraine, met with Mr. Jim Moorman, Senior Resident Inspector, Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station. The items discussed included inspection activities related to the Y2K problem and common regulatory challenges.

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending July 30, 1999

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 30

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Gerke	08/03/99 SD-342	10:00	Markup	S. 1214, S. 59, S. 1244: Regulatory Reform bills; S. 1232: Pension Correction	Senators Thompson/Lieberman Governmental Affairs
Combs	08/03/99 SD-406	10:00	Markup	S. 1090, Superfund Reauthorization	Senators Chafee/Baucus Environment & Public Works
Gerke	08/04/99 CANCELLED	9:30	Chairman Dicus	Y2K Readiness of Electric & Gas Industries	Senators Bennett/Dodd Special Committee on the Year 2000 Technology Problem