

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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INFORMATION REPORT

SECY 99-231

September 16, 1999

For: The Commissioners
From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 10, 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 September 10, 1999

Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (SSES)

During the month of August 1999, the SSES conducted a dry run to move spent fuel from the spent fuel pool to a dry fuel storage pad located within the plant boundary. Having successfully demonstrated that the equipment, procedures, and crews involved in the work were ready to transfer spent fuel, the licensee planned to initiate the first fuel transfer to the storage location the week of September 6, 1999, but problems developed and the transfer has been delayed for a few weeks.

Transnuclear West, Inc. (TWI), the licensee's contractor, supplied a standardized NUHOMS Horizontal Modular Storage system. The horizontal storage modules were cast by TWI's subcontractor, Bayshore Concrete Company, and the dry storage canisters by Ranor.

South Texas Project, Units 1&2 -- August 31 - September 1, 1999 Meeting to Discuss Risk-Informed Exemption Requests

On August 31 and September 1, 1999, the NRC met with STP Nuclear Operating Company (STPNOC) to discuss the July 13, 1999, request for 14 risk-informed exemptions to exclude safety-related low safety significant (LSS) and non-risk significant (NRS) components from the scope of various regulations. STPNOC met with the NRC in two separate forums: one was a 1½-day working-level meeting, and the other was a ½-day management-level meeting where the licensee met primarily with NRC's Risk-Informed Licensing Panel (RILP).

At the working-level meeting, STPNOC provided background information on their risk-informed processes and how the results from its NRC-approved Graded QA program will be used to support the exemptions. STPNOC believes that they have a robust process to determine equipment safety significance and that LSS/NRS items should be treated equivalent to non-safety related. STPNOC is planning a supplement to address NRC feedback from the meeting.

Reactor Oversight Process Improvements

On September 7, 1999, Region III and the Inspection Program Branch held a public meeting with Commonwealth Edison and Northern States Power Company at the Region III office to discuss pilot program status and issues at Quad Cities and Prairie Island. During this meeting the licensees discussed pilot process feedback on Performance Indicators, Risk-Informed Baseline Inspection Process, Significant Determination Process, Assessment, Enforcement, and Information Systems. During this meeting, the NRC shared the lessons learned and progress of the pilot program.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Paducah Radiation Protection Inspection

During the week of August 30, 1999, an inspection team comprised of health physics specialists from the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Region I, and Region III conducted a confirmatory inspection of the Radiation Protection (RP) Program for the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Paducah, Kentucky. The inspection was limited to RP program application to the enrichment processes which are regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and are under the control of the United States Enrichment Corporation. The focus was on transuranics, including plutonium. A similar inspection is planned at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant, in Ohio, during the week of September 13, 1999. Inspection exit meetings are expected to be held near the two sites in October 1999, and to be open to the public.

Holtec HI-STAR 100 Cask

On September 3, 1999, a Federal Register Notice announced the promulgation of a final rule adding Holtec International's (Holtec's) HI-STAR 100 to the list of casks approved for use by general licensees, pursuant to 10 CFR Part 72. This final rule is effective October 4, 1999. The HI-STAR 100 is the first of a new generation of dual-purpose casks to be fully certified for use under both 10 CFR Part 71 (Transportation) and 10 CFR Part 72 (Storage). Holtec has indicated that the initial users for the Hi-STAR 100 are Commonwealth Edison (Dresden) and the Southern Company (Hatch).

Private Fuel Storage Meetings

On September 1, 1999, staff from the Spent Fuel Project Office held two meetings in Utah to discuss Private Fuel Storage (PFS), Limited Liability Corporation's application to construct and operate an independent spent fuel storage installation on the reservation of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians. The first meeting with the applicant concerned the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's second request for additional information (RAI) for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project. The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Land Management, which are cooperating Federal agencies in development of the EIS, also participated in this meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to assure that the applicant understood the RAI and would be able to respond fully and accurately to it. This meeting was held in the Utah Office of the Bureau of Land Management in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The second meeting was with representatives of the Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to discuss items of concern raised by the SHPO regarding historical and cultural resources at or near the proposed PFS facility. This meeting was held in the SHPO's offices, also in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Proposed Rule Signed by EDO

On September 10, 1999, the Executive Director for Operations approved a proposed rule which amends 10 CFR Part 72.214, "List of approved spent fuel storage casks," by adding the Holtec HI-STORM 100 cask system to the list of approved spent fuel storage casks. This amendment would allow the holders of power reactor operating licenses to store spent fuel in the approved casks under a general license.

This notice informs the Commission that, in accordance with the rulemaking authority delegated to the EDO, the EDO has signed this proposed rule and proposes to forward it on September 20, 1999, to the Office of the Federal Register for publication, unless otherwise directed by the Commission.

September 10, 1999

ENCLOSURE B

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Kickoff Meeting on Clearance of Recycled Soils

On August 26, staff from RES and NMSS met at the National Agricultural Library (NAL) in Beltsville, Maryland, with research staff from NAL to discuss the recently approved NRC-Agricultural Research Service Interagency Agreement (IAA). The objective of the IAA is to provide the NRC staff with technical references and database for evaluating possible dose impacts from the clearance of soils from NRC-licensed facilities. The kickoff meeting was to review the IAA tasks as input to the radiological assessment, review and approve the QA/QC plan, establish dates for the delivery of research products, and establish dates for NRC-NAL staff meetings to review them. The IAA comes under a Memorandum of Understanding between the NRC's Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research and the Agricultural Research Service. A meeting at NRC Headquarters is scheduled for September 29, 1999, for the NAL researchers and NRC staff to review the first deliverable, initial literature search results that are due September 20, 1999.

First Meeting on PIRT for High-Burnup Fuel

The first meeting to develop Phenomena Identification and Ranking Tables (PIRTs) for high-burnup fuel under accident conditions was held on August 31-September 2. Twenty of the world's best technical experts participated in the first meeting, and the experts represented a balance between industry, universities, and foreign research and regulatory organizations. NRC staff and contractors (LANL, BNL, PNNL, and ANL) made presentations and participated in the discussions.

PIRTs have been used at NRC since 1988 and they provide a structured method to obtain technical understanding that is needed to address certain issues. In the present case, the PIRTs are intended to help answer questions such as: Is there enough information to assess high-burnup fuel behavior? Do we need different fuel damage criteria for different cladding alloys (Zirc-4, Zirlo, M5, Zirc-2, Zirc-liner)? Can we do integral tests with one cladding alloy and calculate the behavior of others using measured mechanical properties? Do transient tests in a sodium loop or a stagnant water capsule represent enough of the important phenomena to be satisfactory? Is pulse width a critical parameter for transient testing?

The first of four accident sequences to be considered is a PWR rod ejection accident, which is analyzed in plant safety analyses. Three multi-day working meetings will be needed to complete this first PIRT, and completion is expected in December. A web page has been created at <http://www.nrc.gov/RES/PIRT> to make transcripts and other information available to the participants.

Incident Response Operations
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS:

1. PNO-I-99-041, Metorex, Inc., LOST GENERALLY LICENSED DEVICES
2. PNO-I-99-042, DC Fabricators, Inc., LOST GENERALLY LICENSED DEVICE
3. PNO-II-99-034A, Bond Paving Company, Inc., STOLEN TROXLER MOISTURE DENSITY GAUGE
4. PNO-III-99-040A, Spectrum Pharmacy, Inc., CONTAMINATION INCIDENT IN NUCLEAR PHARMACY (UPDATE)
5. PNO-III-99-041, Commonwealth Edison Co., EARTHQUAKE FELT AT SITE: NO DAMAGE OBSERVED

September 10, 1999

ENCLOSURE D

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: (HI-STAR 100) Addition (Part 72)

A final rule that adds the Holtec International HI-STAR 100 cask system to the list of approved spent fuel storage casks was published in the Federal Register on September 3, 1999 (64 FR 48259). The amendment allows holders of nuclear power plant operating licenses to store spent fuel in this approved cask system under a general license. The final rule becomes effective October 4, 1999.

Electronic Availability of NRC Public Records and Ending of NRC Local Public Document Room Program (Parts 1, 2, 7, 9, 50, 51, 52, 60, 62, 72, 75, 76, 100, and 110)

A final rule that amends NRC's regulations to reflect the way the NRC makes its records available to the public was published in the Federal Register on September 9, 1999 (64 FR 48942). The final rule reflects the NRC's decision to implement a new document management system that provides for the electronic storage, retrieval, and on-line ordering of publicly available NRC official records. The final rule becomes effective October 12, 1999.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of
September 3, 1999 through September 9, 1999:

BP Research, license # 34-01208-02 and amendments. (FOIA/PA 99-352)

Referral from Federal Bureau of Investigation. (FOIA/PA 99-353)

Nine Mile Point, allegation summaries since 1/1/96. (FOIA/PA 99-354)

Unimportant quantities of source material, 10 CFR Part 40, in relation to identified licensees in MD, DE, PA, & IL. (FOIA/PA 99-355)

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ENCLOSURE G

Office of Human Resources
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending September 10, 1999

Arrivals		
CLINE, Leonard	REACTOR ENGINEER	RI
GOLDER, Jennifer	PROGRAM ANALYST	OCFO
PARK, Edna	BRANCH CHIEF	OCFO
PETERS, Sean	REACTOR ENGINEER	RI
POWELL, Raymond	RESIDENT INSPECTOR	RIII
WILLIAMS, Patrice	ACCOUNTANT	OCFO
Retirements		
SCHAPKER, Jerome	REACTOR ENGINEER	RIII
Departures		
AXELSON, Kimberly	SUMMER CLERICAL	RIII
GREENMAN, Angela	FIELD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER	OPA
GROBAKER, John	SUMMER TECHNICAL INTERN	RI
HAWKINS, Cheryl	SUMMER TECHNICAL INTERN	ACRS
PIERARD, Susan	PROCUREMENT ASSISTANT (OA)	RIV
ROTHSTEIN, Stanley	SR ENFORCEMENT SPECIALIST	OE
SPETS, James	RESIDENT INSPECTOR	RIV

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
99-190	NRC Invites Public to Submit Nominations for Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste
99-191	NRC Issues Report Confirming No Y2K Problems Affecting Safety Systems of Nuclear Power Plants - Updates Y2K Readiness Safety
99-192	NRC to Hold San Francisco Meeting on Control of Solid Materials From Licensed Facilities
99-193	NRC Seeks Public Input to Revise Safety Inspection Program for Fuel Cycle Facilities; Schedules Meeting
99-194	NRC Names John D. Sieber to the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
Regions:	
I-99-76	Note to Editors: NRC to Receive Interim Results of Indian Point 2 Trip Review
IV-99-32	Note to Editors: Commissioner Diaz Cancels Visit to Texas

September 10, 1999

ENCLOSURE M

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Planning Session at the Department of State on the Upcoming IAEA Asian Safety Program Advisory Group Meeting (AGM)

The second annual IAEA Advisory Group Meeting for the Extrabudgetary Program (EBP) on the Safety of Nuclear Installations in the South East Asia, Pacific, and Far East Countries will take place in Vienna October 19-21. This "new" EBP is a major IAEA initiative launched in the fall of 1997 to help ensure that the recipients (China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam) develop sound safety infrastructures either before they establish or, in the case of China, as they expand their civilian nuclear power programs. All have announced intent to make significant commitments to nuclear power over the next 10-20 years. (Much of the IAEA support for this program has been redirected from resources previously dedicated to the EBP for RBMKs and VVERs.) On September 10, OIP represented NRC at an interagency meeting at the Department of State called to discuss USG strategies and priorities in the course of outlining the contents of the instruction cable for the U.S. delegation to the meeting. OIP will also participate in the October AGM, which the IAEA has invited Dr. Terry Lash of DOE to chair.

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ENCLOSURE N

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SECY-99-203	8/4/99	Regulatory Guide for Updated Final Safety Analysis Reports in Accordance with 10 CFR 50.71(e)
SRM on 99-203	9/8/99	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 99-203	9/8/99	(same)
2. M990910	9/10/99	Staff Requirements - Affirmation Session, Friday, September 10, 1999: I. SECY-99-207-Final Rule: Respiratory Protection and Controls to Restrict Internal Exposures, 10 CFR Part 20; II. SECY-99-216-Yankee Atomic Electric Company (Yankee Nuclear Power Station), Docket No. 50-029-LA, Yankee Atomic's Motion for Leave to Withdraw Appeal of LBP-99-14
SECY-99-207	8/5/99	Final Rule: "Respiratory Protection and Controls to Restrict Internal Exposures, 10 CFR Part 20"
Commission Voting Record on 99-207	9/10/99	(same)
Information Papers		
1. SECY-99-217	8/20/99	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending August 20, 1999

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Joseph Colvin, Nuclear Energy Institute, dated August 20, 1999, concerns a petition for rulemaking (PRM-50-61) regarding fire protection.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. 10 CFR Part 73; State of Nevada; Receipt of Petition for Rulemaking; Docket No. PRM-73-10.

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ENCLOSURE O

2. Applications for Licenses to Export Nuclear Material (Cambridge Isotope Laboratories, Inc.).
3. Licensing Support Network Advisory Review Panel; Notice of Public Meeting on October 13, 1999, in Las Vegas, Nevada.
4. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Subcommittee Meeting on Planning and Procedures; Notice of Meeting on September 29, 1999.

September 10, 1999

ENCLOSURE O

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Indian Point 2 (IP2)

On Tuesday, August 31, 1999, at 2:30 p.m., Consolidated Edison Company's (Con Edison) Indian Point 2 experienced a reactor trip with complications because of unexpected responses by the electrical distribution system. In addition, one station battery was fully discharged, which caused loss of a vital instrument bus. This led to a loss of key annunciators and the subsequent declaration of an Unusual Event. An Augmented Inspection Team was dispatched on September 2 and has been on-site performing a detailed review of the event, its causes, and the corrective action to date. Con Edison also has assembled an independent assessment team (comprised of industry representatives) to review the event. PNs 1-99-40 and 1-99-40A provide additional information.

Commissioner Jeffrey Merrifield and Region I Administrator Hub Miller toured the IP2 facility on September 9, 1999, and met with selected licensee staff and management.

Confirmatory Survey Conducted at BWXT's Parks Township Facility by ORISE

On August 30-September 3, 1999, staff of the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) and Region I conducted a confirmatory survey of Building A located at the Parks Township facility operated by BWXT's subsidiary Babcock & Wilcox Services, Inc. Building A was used as a plutonium processing facility for reactor component repairs, maintenance, testing, and refurbishment of equipment and materials that were contaminated with mixed fission and activation products.

The NRC requested the services of the ORISE team to provide independent contractor field data reviews and radiological data for use by the NRC in evaluating the adequacy and accuracy of the licensee's procedures and final status survey results, relative to established guidelines. The survey activities involved direct measurements, wipe testing, and sample collection for gamma and alpha spectroscopy.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Florida Power and Light Company - St. Lucie and Turkey Point

On September 8, representatives from Florida Power and Light Company attended a management meeting with the Regional Administrator in the Regional office to discuss St. Lucie and Turkey Point engineering performance issues. The discussion included the status of Y2K issues at Turkey Point and the licensee's review of environmental qualification issues at St. Lucie

Agreement State Counterpart Meeting

On September 8-10, the Director of Nuclear Materials Safety and the Region II Agreement State Program Officer attended the Agreement State Counterpart meeting in Austin, Texas.

Duke Energy Corporation -- Catawba Self-Assessment

On September 9, representatives from Duke Energy Corporation attended a management meeting in the Regional office with the Regional Administrator and other staff. The purpose of this meeting was to present a self-assessment of Catawba Nuclear Station performance.

Duke Energy Corporation -- McGuire Operator Licensing Certification Presentation Ceremony

On September 9, the Director of Division of Reactor Safety attended an Operator Licensing Certification Presentation during an evening ceremony.

Computer Issues on September 9, 1999

Resident inspectors increased their attention to computer issues related to the transition through the September 9, 1999 date. While the region did not have a plan for more resident coverage through that evening, at Farley a resident was present at the site during the roll-over period. Additionally, licensees did participate in a reliability council exercise during that night and some provided extra staffing at their sites. No significant issues were identified. However, H.B. Robinson did report that a date function in the control room for an in-core cooling monitor panel display failed. This date function is not required to satisfy system operability and is used only during maintenance on the system. During testing in 1998, the licensee identified that this date function would fail. The function will be restored in October when it is expected that the software will allow resetting of the date. Two other computer issues did arise, one at Turkey Point (an ERDS computer) and one at Oconee (Operator Aid Computer). After investigation, neither failure was related to the roll-over. Turkey Point's computer issue was a hard disk failure and Oconee had a subroutine failure to backup data properly.

Region III
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 10, 1999

Meeting with Pilot Plant Utilities

On September 7, 1999, the Regional Administrator and members of the regional and headquarters staffs met in the Regional Office with representatives of Commonwealth Edison Company and Northern States Power Company, the two Region III utilities with sites in the pilot phase for the new inspection and oversight program. The meeting was to solicit the views of the two utilities on their experiences with the first several months of the pilot program at Quad Cities and Prairie Island. The region also invited the other Region III utilities to attend the meeting to benefit from the experiences of the sites in the pilot program.

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ENCLOSURE P

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending September 10, 1999

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 33

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Gerke	TBA SD-342	TBA	Markup	S. 59, S. 1244: Regulatory Reform bills	Senators Thompson/Lieberman Governmental Affairs
Gerke	TBA	TBA	Markup	H.R. 2445, Federalism Accountability Act	Reps. Burton/Waxman Government Reform
Gerke	09/13/99 Nashville, TN	9:30	Field Hearing	Electricity Competition focusing on the role of TVA	Reps. Barton/Hall Energy and Power Commerce
Combs	09/15/99 SD-366	10:00	Ivan Itkin	Confirmation Hearing for DOE's Director of the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management	Senators Murkowski/Bingaman Energy & Natural Resources
Gerke	09/15/99 SD-628	10:00	Sally Katzen	Confirmation Hearing for Deputy Director, OMB	Senators Thompson/Lieberman Governmental Affairs
Combs	09/16/99 2322 RHOB	10:00	NRC staff, DOE, EPA, USEC, KY, Bechtel, Lockheed-Martin	Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant	Reps. Upton/Klink Oversight and Investigations Commerce
Gerke	09/22/99 2167 RHOB	10:00	TBA	TVA and Electricity Restructuring	Reps. Boehlert/Borski Water Resources and Environment Transportation and Infrastructure
Gerke	09/23/99 TENTATIVE	9:30	NRC, DOE, NERC, Y2K Council	Will the Lights Stay On?	Senators Murkowski/Bingaman Energy and Natural Resources

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ENCLOSURE R