

June 4, 1999

SECY 99-150

For: The Commissioners  
From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO  
/s/  
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING May 28, 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 Programs	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. Shackelford, OEDO

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Contingency Plan Audits

During the week of May 17-21, 1999, the NRR staff completed 3 of the 6 audits of licensees' Y2K contingency plans. The sites audited were Indian Point 2, Turkey Point, and Palo Verde. Reports from the audits will be made publicly available and posted on the NRC Web site.

At Palo Verde and Turkey Point, the staff found that the licensees had completed most of their contingency planning for internal events, external events, and certain remediated actions. There were minor contingency planning details at Palo Verde that were still being finalized. The Indian Point 2 licensee was not as far along with the contingency planning as at the other two sites. However, the licensee stated that the contingency planning would be completed by the end of June. The licensee has determined that contingency planning for safety systems is not necessary at Indian Point 2 because the design does not have digital systems.

The results of these audits indicate that all three of the licensees are following plans that are consistent with the guidance in NEI/NUSMG 98-07 and that the July 1, 1999, date will be met. The remaining three audits of licensees' Y2K contingency plans are scheduled for mid-June, 1999. The sites involved are Diablo Canyon, Duane Arnold, and Oconee.

License Renewal

By its letter dated May 24, 1999, Carolina Power & Light Company expressed its intent to submit a license renewal application for the H. B. Robinson Steam Electric Plant (HBRSEP), Unit No. 2. The unit's operating license will expire July 31, 2010. The licensee is planning to make its submittal by the end of 2003. HBRSEP is a 3-loop Westinghouse pressurized-water reactor with a generating capacity of 739 MWe (gross) and its Operating License was originally issued on July 31, 1970.

Fermi Unit 2

The Detroit Edison Company (DECo) has announced that it will replace the Fermi 2 high-pressure turbine during the seventh refueling outage, scheduled to start in the spring of the year 2000. This will allow the plant to operate at 100 percent power. The plant is currently limited to approximately 97 percent power because the secondary system (piping, valves, and turbine) cannot pass the steam flow necessary to reach 100 percent power.

The NRC approved a 4.2 percent uprate for Fermi 2 in September 1992. The licensee has resolved various problems related to the steam piping and the turbine control valves over the intervening years. However, the most recent test data have made it clear that the plant will not be able to reach the uprated 100 percent power without major modifications. The licensee investigated its options and decided that the replacement of the high-pressure turbine would be the best choice. Following the modification, the licensee will perform the remaining power uprate testing to confirm proper operation of the plant systems at the higher power level. Operation at 100 percent power will allow the licensee to generate an additional estimated 40 to

42 megawatts of electrical power.

#### Decommissioning - Yankee Rowe

By letter dated May 25, 1999, from Don Davis, President and CEO of Yankee Atomic Electric Company, the NRC was informed that Yankee is withdrawing its request for NRC approval of the license termination plan (LTP) the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) on May 26 and request termination of the hearing. The licensee plans to revise the LTP using MARSSIM methodology and to resubmit the Plan. No date for resubmission of the plan by Yankee was provided.

#### Decommissioning - Maine Yankee

On May 25, 1999, members of the NRC staff (NRR, NMSS, OGC, and OSP) met at NRC headquarters in Rockville, Maryland, with staff of Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company (MYAPC) and its contractors, Stone & Webster Engineering Corporation (SWEC) and Radiological Services, Inc. (RSI), to discuss the Maine Yankee Atomic Power Station (MYAPS) LTP.

MYAPC provided an overview of their decommissioning and a schedule for the LTP. The licensee then followed with a technical discussion of dose assessments and the dose assessment methods that Maine Yankee intends to submit as part of the LTP to determine whether the site meets NRC requirements for unrestricted release.

MYAPC projects that it will submit the LTP on November 1, 1999. Based on that submittal date, it is requesting that the NRC staff act on their request by June 1, 2000. MYAPC and SWEC intend to rubblize many of the concrete structures on site with subsequent onsite disposal of the rubblized concrete. RSI is developing dose assessment techniques that will model the dose associated with the onsite disposal of the rubblized concrete. MYAPC and RSI indicated their desire to meet again prior to LTP submittal to discuss with the staff their dose assessment approach to facilitate use of their planned dismantlement process.

In addition, members of the staff met with officials from the State of Maine (the Nuclear Inspector and the Nuclear Advisor) to discuss issues of interest to the State. The topics discussed included NRC jurisdiction, free release criteria, and the LTP.

#### Callaway Plant Unit 1

On May 21, 1999, the staff issued an amendment to Union Electric's (UE) Callaway Plant Unit 1 license approving the Electrosleeve steam generator tube repair method for two operating cycles. The Electrosleeve, developed by Framatome Technologies Incorporated (FTI), is a high-purity nano-crystalline nickel sleeve that is electrochemically deposited on the inner surface of a steam generator tube. The Electrosleeve is designed to span a known flaw in the steam generator tube and function as the pressure boundary. UE is the first licensee to request approval of the Electrosleeve repair method.

UE plans to use ultrasonic testing (UT) to periodically verify the safety factors assumed in the Electrosleeve design are maintained for all types of service induced degradation. During the

review of this amendment application, the staff identified a concern regarding the accuracy of the UT inservice inspection method. UE is continuing to work with FTI to develop additional UT analysis techniques to address the staff's concern. The staff indicated that in the interim, the amendment could be approved for Callaway Plant with a two cycle limitation that requires removal of all Electrosleeves from service after two operating cycles. The staff considers the two cycle limitation to be acceptable based on Electrosleeve corrosion test results and the expected corrosion resistance of Electrosleeves relative to the Alloy 600 steam generator tube material. The staff expects, during the next two operating cycles, UE and FTI to complete qualification of the UT technique and submit an amendment application requesting the staff remove the two cycle limitation.

#### NRR Allegations Audit and Initiatives

A recent audit of the handling of allegations by NRR indicated significant improvement over last year. While NRR is pleased with the audit results, NRR is working on a number of initiatives intended to further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the process as well as increase public confidence by ensuring more timely responses. These initiatives include:

1. Centralization (to the maximum extent) of the allegation review function in IQMB.
2. Development of an agency-wide web-based training module for annual allegation training. This is in the process of being developed by OHR, NRR, and Region II staff.
3. The use of a lap-top computer and a projector to facilitate the timely issuance of ARB meeting summaries.
4. The use of restaurant-like pagers to alert ARB participants to report in a timely manner to ARB meetings.

#### Oversight Program Transition Task Force

The Regulatory Oversight Process Pilot workshop was conducted in Philadelphia, PA from May 17-20, 1999. About 300 people, including many industry representatives, attended the workshop over the 4 day period. Regional support for the workshop was excellent. In conjunction with the above, TTF staff conducted a half-day utility management public workshop to provide an overview of the oversight processes.

The Pilot program to implement the new regulatory oversight process is described in Commission papers SECY-99-007 and SECY-99-007A for nine plants, and will start as scheduled on May 30, 1999. Baseline procedures and pilot program documents were sent to all nine pilot plant participants, including applicable state representatives.

#### NRC INPO Meeting

On May 20, 1999, Dave Trimble, Chief, Operator Licensing and Human Performance Section, Operator Licensing, Human Performance and Plant Support Branch (IOHB), NRR, met with Bill Fitzpatrick, Manager, Training Evaluation Department, INPO in a follow-up to the February 25, 1999, Annual NRC/INPO Training Coordination Meeting. Items discussed were actions taken by

the NRC to ensure licensing examinations are based on licensee accredited programs rather than the 1980 "Denton Letter," development of an INPO managed, web-based licensed operator examination question bank, instructor training and qualification, changes to the accredited licensed operator and senior operator requalification program guidelines, and fatigue. In attendance were Frank Collins, George Usova, Clare Goodman, and Rick Pelton of IOHB; Mark Satorius, Region II Coordinator; EDO; and Jim Manchukin of INPO.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Meeting with Mineral Management Services

On May 18, 1999, management representatives from the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety and Region IV met with the Mineral Management Services (MMS), U.S. Department of the Interior, in New Orleans, Louisiana. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of MMS providing helicopter transport for Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) inspectors to offshore oil drilling platforms and lay barges in order to conduct inspections of industrial radiography operations conducted within federal jurisdiction under reciprocity.

MMS was provided with an overview of NRC's inspection and enforcement program related to industrial radiography and a number of key issues were discussed including: availability of helicopter transport; coordination of flight operations and inspection schedules; required communications with platform or lay barge operators; required personnel training and safety equipment for offshore activities; and capacity to conduct reactive inspections on short notice. The MMS management representatives indicated preliminary approval for providing helicopter transport for NRC inspectors under arrangements which would allow for essentially unannounced inspections and for dealing with reactive inspections.

A summary letter is in preparation which will identify the highlights of the meeting and the general understanding which was reached by the participants. A Letter of Understanding will then be developed promptly and coordinated with MMS with the objective of initiating inspection at offshore sites as soon as possible.

International Atomic Energy Agency Team Visit to Vietnam

On May 15-22, 1999, an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) team visited Hanoi to discuss the Vietnamese government's plans for building a nuclear power reactor in Vietnam. Discussions were carried out by the team with members of the Vietnam Atomic Energy Commission and the Vietnam Radiation Protection Group. The IAEA team consisted of 5 members: 2 from IAEA in Vienna; 1 from England; 1 from the Republic of Korea; and 1 from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

The team was well received by the Vietnamese government, and they were quite eager to learn all that the team had to tell them about their project. The Vietnamese group in charge of the Dalat research reactor and radiation regulation in Vietnam is anxious to build a nuclear power reactor by about the year 2015. Although the group with which the IAEA team worked is enthusiastic about the nuclear option, it has not yet been endorsed by all levels of the Vietnamese government, and a decision is expected within the next year. If a decision is made in favor of the nuclear option, Vietnam would have to start essentially from scratch, and the team spent much of the week explaining to their Vietnamese counterparts in detail what that entails. They would have to develop legislation to authorize a body to regulate the reactor, and they would have to establish a body that would be in charge of building and operating it. Reactor licensing procedures would have to be developed, as well as regulations for radiation protection and reactor safety. Vietnam anticipates using either the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as

amended, and NRC's regulations; those of the United Kingdom; or possibly those of another country that is in a similar stage of economic development as a model. By the end of the week, the IAEA mission succeeded in explaining in detail all of the above considerations to their Vietnamese counterparts and in discussing the various options open to them. Although somewhat daunted by the prospects, the Vietnamese remained enthusiastic about the project and plan to go ahead with it.

#### Meeting with International Atomic Energy Agency on Safeguards at BWX Technologies

On May 20-21, 1999, staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards and BWX Technologies met with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at BWX Technologies in Lynchburg, Virginia, to discuss the possible application of safeguards to the downblending of 50 tons of highly enriched uranium declared excess to U.S. national security needs. The BWX Technologies staff described the downblending facility, material flows, and downblending operations. The IAEA described the safeguards approach that they felt would be applicable to the facility. Both the operator and the IAEA agreed that this method could effectively and efficiently verify the downblending activity. The agreed safeguards approach must now be formally analyzed by IAEA and submitted to IAEA management for approval. Once approved, it would be applied to the high enriched uranium downblending effort scheduled to begin during Fall 1999.

#### Issuance of Preliminary Certificate of Compliance and Safety Evaluation Report for the TN-68

On May 20, 1999, the Spent Fuel Project Office finalized the preliminary Certificate of Compliance and Safety Evaluation Report for the TN-68 Dry Storage Cask system for rulemaking. The TN-68 is designed to hold 68 intact unconsolidated boiling water reactor fuel assemblies with or without fuel channels. The TN-68 cask is to be used under general license at the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station.

#### Release of Grace Energy Sites for Unrestricted Use

On May 5, 1999, Source Materials License SUA-480 for the three non-operating Grace Energy uranium extraction sites in New Mexico was terminated and the sites were released for unrestricted use. The action was noted in a Federal Register notice published on May 11, 1999. The Grace Energy sites were reclaimed by representatives of the estate of Michael P. Grace under a final reclamation plan that was reviewed and accepted by staff of the Division of Waste Management.

The Final Reclamation Plan documents the reclamation of the three sites and the final radiation survey data for each site. The report indicates that trash and debris were surveyed for release and then taken to a Class D landfill. Existing wells were plugged and abandoned or permitted according to New Mexico standards, and 1298 cubic yards of contaminated soils and debris were disposed of at an NRC-licensed uranium tailings disposal cell. All reclamation activities were conducted under the supervision of a qualified Radiation Safety Officer.

#### Staff Attends Steel Mill Waste Conference

On May 19, 1999, staff from the Division of Waste Management (DWM) participated in the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual "Steel Mill Waste" Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. DWM staff presented an overview of the Final Branch Technical Position on the Disposition of Cesium-137 Contaminated Emission Control Dust, and participated in a panel discussion on the legal and regulatory issues associated with managing such material. During the meeting several participants, representing domestic and Canadian scrap steel recyclers, informally expressed their concern regarding an effort to re-introduce contaminated steel into general commerce. The NRC staff indicated to the participants that the agency was evaluating the clearance of contaminated material in conjunction with other federal regulatory authorities via the Interagency Steering Committee on Radiation Standards.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Meeting of the EPRI-NRC Research Management Board

On May 14, 1999, Ashok Thadani and members of RES staff met with Robin Jones and representatives of Electric Power Research Center (EPRI) to review the status of cooperative research programs between NRC and industry. In addition to EPRI representatives attending the meeting at NRC Headquarters, video conferencing with EPRI Headquarters in Palo Alto, CA, allowed increased participation by EPRI staff. This meeting of the Management Board was held pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NRC and EPRI on Cooperative Nuclear Safety Research. Cooperation was discussed in the areas of high burn-up fuel, steam generator tube integrity, fire protection, and burn-up credit for fuel storage research. Of particular note during this meeting was the signing of two new addenda to the MOU. The first addendum, for cooperative research for welding highly irradiated materials to repair degraded bwr in-vessel components, will allow technical information to be exchanged as well as cost sharing to address in-vessel sampling of BWR components. This cooperative research will provide data to support decisions regarding the feasibility and acceptability of weld repair for degraded BWR in-vessel components. The second addendum provides additional guidance on the treatment of NRC proprietary and EPRI commercial information.

Incident Response Operations  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS:

1. PNO-I-99-024, Dept. of the Army, (Watervliet Arsenal), POSSIBLE LOSS OF A 3 CURIE TRITIUM SOURCE
2. PNO-I-99-024A, Dept. of the Army, (Watervliet Arsenal), POSSIBLE LOSS OF A 3 CURIE TRITIUM SOURCE
3. PNO-I-99-025, Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, LOSS OF A SMALL QUANTITY OF PHOSPHORUS-32
4. PNO-99-026, Boston Edison Co. (Pilgrim 1), MAIN TRANSFORMER FIRE - MEDIA INTEREST
5. PNO-II-99-017, Duke Power Co. (Catawba 2), SHUTDOWN IN EXCESS OF 72 HOURS
6. PNO-II-99-019, Bwx Technologies, IDENTIFICATION OF SNM IN PROCESSING EQUIPMENT IN AN UNANALYZED NUCLEAR CRITICALITY SAFETY CONDITION
7. PNO-III-99-027, Wisconsin Electric Power Co., (Point Beach 1), MANUAL REACTOR TRIP AND SAFETY INJECTION DUE TO FEEDWATER HEATER RUPTURE
8. PNO-III-99-028, Illinois Power Co. (Clinton 1), UNIT STARTUP AFTER 31-MONTH OUTAGE
9. PNO-IV-99-026, California Licensee, (Kaiser Permanente Med Care Program), THERAPEUTIC MISADMINISTRATION INVOLVING A HIGH DOSE RATE REMOTE AFTER LOAD
10. PNO-IV-99-027, Texas Licensee (Maxim Technology), LOST PORTABLE MOISTURE/DENSITY GAUGE

Office of Administration  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Regional Reviews

The Division of Contracts and Property Management conducted a property inventory and procurement review at Region IV from May 17 through May 20, 1999. The review team inventoried 1010 items of property and examined 512 bankcard transactions, 91 imprest fund transactions and 137 purchase orders for FY98 and FY99. A report of the review team's findings is expected to be issued in June.

Chief Information Officer  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of  
May 21, 1999 through May 27, 1999:

Remote Afterloading Devices, latest version of FC-86-4, Information required for licensing.  
(FOIA/PA 99-237)

COG Minerals Corp., uranium recovery facility in UT, ground-water cleanup pilot project.  
(FOIA/PA 99-238)

Self, ASLBP file re NRC investigation of 1996 Millstone layoffs and OI report 1-96-007.  
(FOIA/PA 99-239)

Risk assessment on bundling of exempt quantities in gauging devices without regulatory control,  
documentation regarding status of assessment. (FOIA/PA 99-240)

Radiation exposure, medical use exceeding 5.0 rem/yr, 1990 through present.  
(FOIA/PA 99-241)

Materials licensee listing for Bucks County, PA. (FOIA/PA 99-242)

NUREGs: NUREG-0933, Sup. 22, and NUREG-1021, Rev. 8. (FOIA/PA 99-243)

Perry nuclear plant, OI report 3-98-007 and supporting documentation. (FOIA/PA 99-244)

Contract NRC-33-95-188, Telephone and/or Communication Services. (FOIA/PA 99-245)

Office of Human Resources  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Office of Human Resources Staff Meet with Officials from Eastern Management Development Center, OPM

On May 26, 1999, Lillian van Santen and Mary Louise Roe met with the Director, Eastern Management Development Center, and the Director, Agency Relations, both from OPM, to discuss FY2000 executive and management development for NRC managers and supervisors.

<b>Arrivals</b>		
CAIN, Brendan	HR MANAGEMENT ANALYST	HR
PETERSON, Jessica	OFFICE CLERK	RIII
<b>Retirements</b>		
None		
<b>Departures</b>		
None		

Office of Public Affairs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Media Interest

Chairman Jackson was interviewed by Energy Daily, Dow Jones, and Black Engineering Magazine.

There was local media interest in a symposium in Harrisburg, PA, on potassium iodide issues.

There was high media interest in the Byron meeting on the chilling effect and overtime.

<b>Press Releases</b>	
<b>Headquarters:</b>	
99-106	Note to Editors: ACRS Reports
99-107	NRC Staff Tentatively Finds Oconee License Renewal Environmentally Acceptable; Open for Comment
99-108	NRC to Hold Three Additional Public Meetings in Nevada on Proposed Regulations for Yucca Mountain
99-109	NRC Completes Evaluation of Department of Energy Report on Tritium Production
99-110	NRC Amends Regulations to Expand Opportunities for Participation by Indian Tribal Governments in NRC Hearings
99-111	NRC Invites Public to Submit Nominations for Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
99-112	Note to Editors: ACRS meeting June 30-July 1
<b>Regions:</b>	
I-99-49	NRC Staff Cites Northeast Nuclear Energy Company for Spent Fuel Pool Violations at Millstone 1
II-99-31	NRC Team Finds Duke 'Scoping and Screening' Process Appropriate for Oconee License Renewal; Meeting Scheduled
II-99-32	NRC Staff to Hold Performance Evaluation Meeting at Vogtle
III-99-31	NRC Staff Proposes \$110,000 Fine Against FirstEnergy for Discrimination Against Perry Employee
III-99-32	NRC Staff to Present Review of Utility's Readiness to Load Additional Spent Fuel Casks At Palisades Nuclear Plant
III-99-33	NRC Staff Schedules Public Meeting June 8 to Describe New NRC Inspection Program for Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station
IV-99-22	NRC to Meet With Fansteel, Inc., on Reprocessing Residual Material at Muskogee Plant

IV-99-23

NRC Withdraws \$110,000 Fine Against Entergy's Waterford 3 Nuclear Power Plant

May 28, 1999

ENCLOSURE M

Office of International Programs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Meetings in Ukraine

On May 19-21, 1999, Stuart Treby, OGC, and James Lieberman, OE, held meetings in Kiev, Ukraine, with representatives of the Nuclear Regulatory Administration (NRA). The purpose of the meetings was to evaluate the status of Ukrainian legislative and enforcement activities with which NRC has been assisting under the Lisbon assistance program. The current legal framework of the NRA was discussed, including laws which have been approved by the Ukrainian Rada, draft laws which are awaiting Rada approval, and NRA activities regarding development of future laws and regulations. Also discussed was how the current legal framework, including development and issuance of regulations, is being implemented by the NRA. As requested by NRA, NRC will continue to provide assistance through review and comment on proposed laws and regulations. In the area of enforcement, discussions centered on issues that need to be addressed to establish an effective enforcement program, and topics for potential future cooperation.

Of special interest was the discussion of the March 13, 1999 Presidential decree regarding Ukrainian administrative reform. Under this decree, on June 1, 1999 NRA is designated to become a federal executive branch organization, separate from the Ministry for Environmental Protection and Nuclear Safety of Ukraine (MEPNS). It is expected that the Main State Inspectorate, which currently is separate and independent of the NRA, will be joined with the NRA within a year. The anticipated result of these changes is that the NRA will gain status and importance within the Ukrainian governmental structure.

Office of the Secretary  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
<b>Decision Documents</b>		
1. SRM on Secy-99-063	5/27/99	The Use by Industry of Voluntary Initiatives in the Regulatory Process
Comm. Voting Record on 99-063	5/27/99	(same)
SECY-99-115	4/14/99	Final Rule: Amendments to 10 CFR Part 72- Miscellaneous Changes to Licensing Requirements for the Independent Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste
SRM on SECY-99-115 and SECY-99-138	5/27/99	Staff Requirements - Affirmation Session, May 27, 1999
Commission Voting Record on SECY-99-115	5/27/99	Final Rule: Amendments to 10 CFR Part 72- Miscellaneous Changes to Licensing Requirements for the Independent Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste
COMSECY-99-014	4/27/99	Draft Press Release and Federal Register Notice to Solicit Qualified Candidates for the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
SRM on COMSECY-99-014	5/27/99	(same)
Chairman Jackson vote on COMSECY-99-014	5/17/99	(same)
Cmr Dicus vote on COMSECY-99-014	5/10/99	(same)
Cmr Diaz vote on COMSECY-99-014	5/11/99	(same)
Cmr McGaffigan vote on COMSECY-99-014	5/21/99	(same)
Cmr Merrifield vote on COMSECY-99-014	5/5/99	(same)
<b>Negative Consent Documents</b>		
None		

<b>Information Papers</b>		
1. SECY-99-131	5/13/99	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending May 7, 1999
2. SECY-99-132	5/14/99	Proposed NRC Generic Letter 99-XX, "Laboratory Testing of Nuclear-Grade Activated Charcoal"
<b>Memoranda</b>		
None		

#### Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin, dated May 20, 1999, concerns potential policy matters associated with nuclear plant license transfers
2. Letter to New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson, dated May 20, 1999, concerns continued participation in the State Liaison Officer program
3. Letter to Massachusetts Governor Argeo Paul Cellucci, dated May 20, 1999, concerns continued participation in the State Liaison program
4. Letter to the President, dated May 18, 1999, concerns the proposed "Agreement for Cooperation Between the United States of America and Australia Concerning Technology for the Separation of Isotopes of Uranium by Laser Excitation"
5. Letter to Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman, dated May 18, 1999, concerns provisions which may restrict an individual's right to bring safety information to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission
6. Letter to Gregg B. Shafter and Richard E. Blubaugh, Atlas Corporation, dated May 18, 1999, concerns cleanup of the Atlas Moab site (incoming letters dated February 18, 1999, January 12, 1999, and December 28, 1998, also released)
7. Letter to Joshua Lederberg, the Rockefeller University, dated May 18, 1999, concerns a March 18, 1999, meeting with the Atomic Energy Commission (incoming letter dated March 22, 1999, also released)
8. Letter to the Vice President, dated May 18, 1999, concerns the NRC's Year 2000 program participants (incoming letter dated April 5, 1999, also released)
9. Letter to State Governors, dated May 18, 1999, concerns Year 2000 issues at licensed nuclear facilities
10. Letter Representatives Edward J. Markey, John D. Dingell and Ron Klink, dated May 18, 1999, concerns low staffing levels and excessive staff overtime at commercial nuclear power plants (incoming letter dated February 25, 1999, also released)
11. Letter to Congress, dated May 18, 1999, concerns the NRC Government in the Sunshine Act regulations

May 28, 1999

ENCLOSURE O

12. Letter to Congress, dated May 18, 1999, provides the April monthly report on the status of licensing and regulatory duties

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. 10 CFR Part 2; Informal Hearing Procedures for Adjudications in Materials and Operator Licensing Proceedings: Minor Amendments; Final Rule
2. 10 CFR Part 2; Formal and Informal Adjudicatory Hearing Procedures; Clarification of Eligibility to Participate; Direct Final Rule
3. 10 CFR Part 2; Formal and Informal Adjudicatory Hearing Procedures; Clarification of Eligibility to Participate; Proposed Rule
4. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Meeting of the Subcommittee on Plant License Renewal; Notice of Meeting on June 30 and July 1, 1999
5. Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste; Notice of Meeting on June 23-30, 1999

Region I  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Watervliet Arsenal Theft of Licensed Material

On the evening of Sunday, May 16, 1999, the Sheriff's Department of Saratoga County, New York responded to a break-in at the Wright-Malta Corporation (WMC) and discovered several military devices abandoned outside the facility. Because some of the devices were labeled with radiation symbols, a Hazmat team and the U.S. Army's Watervliet Arsenal Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) were called for assistance. The RSO recovered a M1A1 collimator containing a 10-curie source of tritium. An M140 alignment device that would normally contain a 3-curie source of tritium was also recovered, but the 3-curie tritium source was missing. The individuals involved in the break-in were apprehended on May 20, and admitted that they had taken the 3 curie tritium source, but had abandoned it. The source was recovered on May 20 and, after testing, was determined to be intact, with no leakage of tritium. The Watervliet RSO also reported that all surveys performed of the equipment at the WMC and of the 10-curie source recovered earlier confirmed that the source was also intact and that the equipment was free of contamination.

The Army is still investigating the transfer of the devices containing tritium to WMC, which is not authorized to possess radioactive material. RI issued a Preliminary Notification of Event or Unusual Occurrence (PN) on May 17, 1999 and an update to that PN on May 21, 1999.

Region II  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Duke Energy Corporation - Oconee License Renewal Inspection

The Regional Administrator participated in the Quarterly Press Conference held at the Oconee Nuclear plant on May 26. This conference, which was attended by several members of the media and licensee representatives, was preceded by a meeting during which the staff presented the results of the first Oconee license renewal inspection. The inspection team found that Duke Energy Corporation identified (scoped) key plant systems, structures and components (SSCs) for license renewal consistent with its application, implemented a screening process that was generally successful in identifying SSCs requiring an aging management program, and maintained license renewal reference material in an auditable and retrievable form. The Chief, License Renewal and Standardization Branch, NRR, the Deputy Director, Division of Reactor Safety Region II, and the Oconee License Renewal Team Leader participated in the meeting and the conference. In addition to the results of the license renewal inspection at Oconee, the discussions included an overview of the license renewal process and schedule, Year 2000 Contingency Planning and radioactive waste disposal.

Southern Nuclear Operating Company - Vogtle

On May 28, Regional managers presented the Plant Performance Review results to Vogtle management for the period February 1997 to January 1999.

Tennessee Valley Authority Browns Ferry Exercise with State of Alabama

Region II staff observed both the TVA staff's exercise of the onsite portion of the Emergency Plan as well as the State of Alabama's activities during the ingestion phase during a simulated emergency at the Browns Ferry facility.

Region III  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Emergency Exercise - Dresden

Members of the Region III staff participated in an emergency exercise on May 26, 1999, involving the Dresden Nuclear Power Station. In the exercise, a site team was dispatched to the Corporate Emergency Operation Facility, the Joint Public Information Center, and the onsite Technical Support Center.

Management Meeting with Commonwealth Edison Company - Byron

On May 27, 1999, a management meeting was conducted in the Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, between management representatives from Commonwealth Edison Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on issues involving overtime practices and the safety-conscious work environment at the Byron Nuclear Power Station. There was considerable news media interest in the meeting and in concerns expressed by plant operators on the use of overtime.

Clinton Nuclear Power Station Synchronized to Grid

On May 27, 1999, the generator at the Clinton Nuclear Power Station was synchronized to the distribution grid for the first time since the plant was shut down on September 5, 1996. The plant had remained shut down for repairs and system upgrades, major electrical system modifications, and performance improvement activities. The reactor achieved criticality on May 6, 1999. The reactor was shut down on May 14, 1999, for repairs to a feedwater startup control valve. It was returned to criticality on May 22, 1999.

Region III maintained continuous inspection coverage throughout the restart period. Two inspectors per shift monitored plant operations around the clock. The utility intends to gradually increase power levels with testing activities at specified hold points.

Region IV  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

Region IV Resident Inspector Counterpart Meeting

The semi-annual Resident Inspector counterpart meeting was held May 24-27. Highlights included presentations by the Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory Effectiveness and the Assistant General Counsel for Materials, Litigation and Enforcement. One day was devoted to presentations on the new reactor oversight program by the Chief of the NRR Inspection Programs Branch and a member of his staff.

Open Public Meeting with Fansteel, Incorporated

The Division of Nuclear Materials Safety Director and members of the Region IV staff met with the Fansteel Vice President, General Counsel and Fansteel members on May 27, 1999, in Muskogee, Oklahoma. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the status of Fansteel, Incorporated's operational readiness for reprocessing waste and other materials currently onsite, using hazardous bulk chemicals, to recover radioactive components and rare earth metals.

Korean Embassy Dignitaries Visit San Onofre

On May 28, 1999, Southern California Edison sponsored a visit by South Korean Minister Myung-Hwan Yu and First Secretary Chang-Seok Yang. The dignitaries toured the facility and stopped by the resident inspector office. Minister Yu discussed concerns with the potential for North Korean operators to be trained in the United States and with the construction of light water reactors in North Korea. First Secretary Yang asked about the state of preparation of reactors in the United States for Y2K and was informed of the NRC's Y2K contingency plans.

Congressional Visit to San Onofre

On May 31, 1999, Southern California Edison sponsored a visit by U.S. Congressman Packard and U.S. Senator Domenici. The congressmen toured the facility and discussed spent fuel issues and changes in the NRC with the licensee. During their tour of the Units 2 and 3 control room, the congressmen met the Senior Resident Inspector. The Senior Resident Inspector discussed the significant changes that are ongoing within the inspection program.

Office of Congressional Affairs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 28, 1999

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 21

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Combs	TBA 406 DSOB	TBA	TBA	S. 1090, Superfund Reauthorization	Senators Chafee/Baucus Environment and Public Works
Keeling	TBA 2322 RHOB	TBA	TBA	Security at DOE Laboratories	Reps. Upton/Hall Energy & Power Commerce

Congress is in recess until June 7.