

October 2, 1998

SECY 98-229

For: The Commissioners

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

Subject: /s/  
WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER  
25, 1998

Contents

Enclosure

Nuclear Reactor Regulation	A	
Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards		B
Nuclear Regulatory Research		
C		
Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data		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 Programs	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:  
G. Sanborn, OEDO



Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

Year 2000 Problem Program Audit at Monticello

During the week of September 14, 1998, staff from the Instrumentation and Controls Branch conducted the first of a series of planned sample audits of nuclear power plant licensee Year 2000 (Y2K) problem programs at the Monticello Nuclear Power Plant owned by Northern States Power Company. The staff assessed licensee progress on the Y2K problem program implementation including an evaluation of how the licensee established the inventory of systems to be assessed, detailed assessment methods, plans for and status of remediation of impacted systems and contingency planning. The major findings from the audit were as follows:

1. The licensee did not begin implementation of the Y2K program at Monticello until May 1998. Consequently, they are somewhat behind in their initial assessment and remediation efforts. However, they have completed the inventory of mission critical systems and have not identified a large number of computer-based systems requiring detailed assessment or remediation as yet. Further, while the licensee began implementation of a corporate Y2K program in 1996, they did not formally integrate Monticello into the corporate program until May 1998.
2. The licensee is participating with the BWR Owners Group Y2K efforts. This sharing of information will permit them to accomplish some system remediation far more quickly than if they had to do the work on their own. The licensee is also participating in an alliance of nuclear power plants (Kewaunee, Point Beach, Duane Arnold, and Prairie Island) to share additional Y2K information.
3. The licensee has not begun its contingency planning activities, but will begin them soon and will utilize the NEI/NUSMG 98-07 contingency planning guidance.

The results of completed audits will be shared with the industry at a workshop planned for December of this year and will be provided on the agency external website. The audit findings will assist the staff in determining if additional action on the Y2K problem is needed.

Meeting with Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) and

September 25, 1998

ENCLOSURE A

## Licensees on On-Line Monitoring of Instrumentation Performance Topical Report

On September 22, 1998, staff from the Instrumentation and Controls Branch (HICB) and the Technical Specification Branch met with representatives from EPRI and two licensees in the NRC offices in Rockville, MD on the issue described in EPRI Topical Report EPRI TR-104965, "Calibration Through On-Line Performance Monitoring of Instrument Channels." The HICB staff has worked with EPRI and the industry for several years on development of EPRI TR-104965 and the issues involved in acceptance of on-line monitoring of instrument performance. In EPRI TR-104965, EPRI proposes a significant departure from the current technical specification requirement to perform safety-related instrument channel calibrations during every refueling outage in order to ensure that the instruments are operating within required tolerances. Rather, EPRI specifies the requirements for a system to continuously monitor instrument performance on-line, and thereby identify degrading instrument performance and the need to calibrate based on actual performance. EPRI TR-104965 proposes that calibrations be performed as needed based on instrument performance or on one channel on a staggered basis per refueling outage. South Carolina Electric and Gas Co. has had an on-line monitoring system in operation at the Virgil C. Summer plant for a number of years and has been able to successfully collect data on instrument performance using the system. The staff indicated that it would try to complete its review of EPRI TR-104965 within six months as requested by EPRI and the licensees.

### San Onofre Unit 2

Southern California Edison (SCE), the licensee for San Onofre Unit 2 (SONGS-2), detected steam generator (SG) leakage on Friday, September 18, 1998. The licensee made the decision to shut down the plant at almost 200 gpd. This leak rate did not exceed the Technical Specifications leak rate limit.

The licensee determined the leakage was through a plug on the cold leg side of SG "88." The plug was a Westinghouse ribbed (mechanical) plug made of alloy 690. The licensee determined the water was leaking from between the tube and plug. This indicated that the leakage was due to an inadequate seal between the tube and plug, and was not due to degradation of the plug.

SCE reviewed the installation history of this plug, installation history of all other alloy 690 plugs installed at SONGS-2 and SONGS-3, and previous SONGS-2 experience with leaking alloy 690 plugs. The licensee noted the following: during installation, a

wedge is drawn through the plug to expand the plug and form a mechanical seal between the tube and plug. The licensee noted that plugs in which the wedge had traveled a distance outside the normal range, although still acceptable per the plug design, tended to leak once the original tube degradation reached 100% throughwall. Therefore, the distance the wedge travels during the installation process is indicative of the quality of the seal between the tube and plug. The only other alloy 690 plugs in SONGS-2 in which the wedge traveled a distance outside the normal range were previously repaired. No tubes in SONGS-3 contained alloy 690 plugs in which the wedge traveled a distance outside the normal range.

Therefore, SCE has no further SG inspections planned. The tube with the leaking alloy 690 plug has a welded plug repair installed. The licensee plans to start up within less than a week. NRR/DE staff plan to pursue this issue with Westinghouse to consider potential generic implications.

Issues Associated With Graded Quality Assurance (QA)  
Implementation at South Texas Project (STP)

STP met with the staff to discuss difficulties STP is having fully realizing all the benefits it anticipated in its QA program. In November 1997, the staff approved STP's 50.54(a) change request allowing STP to apply programmatic QA controls in a graded manner commensurate with the safety significance of individual systems, structures and components (SSCs). During implementation of graded QA, STP realized that changing only QA programmatic controls without changing technical requirements, such as American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), EQ, Class 1E, and seismic qualification, only provides about 10% of the expected benefit. It was concluded that design changes or amendment requests are needed under the current regulatory structure to change these technical requirements. It was noted that individual requests for each of the literally thousand of SSCs would result in significant licensee and staff resources being devoted to these low-safety significant items, in direct conflict with risk-informed regulation's purpose. The staff and the licensee agreed to work together to more fully explore different options and try to develop a process which would reduce the resources needed to allow these types of design changes on low safety significant SSCs.

Fire Protection Functional Inspection Workshop

The staff is making arrangements for the Fire Protection Functional Inspection Workshop described in SECY-96-267 and SECY-

98-187. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for November 3, 1998, and will be held in the Baltimore-Washington area.

Site Visit to Turkey Point to Walkdown an Appendix R Exemption Request

On September 14, 1998, staff of the Fire Protection Engineering Section, Plant Systems Branch, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, met with Florida Power and Light (the licensee) at Turkey Point Plant to discuss with the licensee its requests for exemptions from Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 for certain outdoor fire zones and the turbine structure. The licensee discussed the progress to date of its Thermo-Lag Upgrade Project, and the details of the exemption requests.

Following the discussions, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff and the licensee's representatives walked down the turbine building zones that are the subject of the exemption request. During the walk down, the staff assessed postulated turbine lube oil fires with emphasis on the condensate pits and the routing of protected safe shutdown circuits. The staff also observed the work completed and discussed the detailed bases for the exemption requests and the scope of the Thermo-Lag Upgrade Project for the turbine structure. The staff also discussed with the licensee outstanding questions regarding fire zones 106R, 118, and 131 and walked down fire zones 106R and 118 to review the roof construction and the layout of post-fire safe shutdown circuits. As a result of the meeting the licensee will revise some aspects of its exemption submittal and will submit by mid-October 1998, additional information needed by the staff to complete its review. The staff will issue a full meeting summary.

Meeting with BWROG and NEI Regarding Post-Fire Circuit Analysis

On September 17, 1998, staff and technical assistance contractors of the Plant Systems Branch, Electrical Engineering Branch, and Probabilistic Safety Assessment Branch (SPSB) of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR), and the Probabilistic Risk Analysis Branch of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) met with representatives of the Boiling Water Reactor Owners Group (BWROG) Appendix R Committee and the newly-formed Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) Circuit Analysis Issue Task Force. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the efforts of these industry groups to develop Probabilistic Safety Assessment (PSA) related circuit analysis tools and information (NEI Task Force) and a non-PSA related circuit analysis issues guidance document

(BWROG) to address issues associated with post-fire safe shutdown circuit analysis. NEI stated it is coordinating the two efforts and, in the near-term, would submit a letter that describes its technical efforts and its coordination role. In the longer-term, NEI plans to submit its technical proposals for staff review at the start of calendar year 1999, and the BWROG plans to submit a topical report for staff review during the spring of 1999. The staff indicated that it would reflect these industry initiatives in its circuit analysis resolution plan (CARP), and that it would consider these industry efforts in its plans for addressing the circuit analysis issue. The staff and the industry representatives agreed to hold a two day meeting in November to discuss NEI and BWROG progress to date. It was also agreed that another meeting with the BWROG in January 1999, would probably be needed to complete discussions. The staff will issue a meeting summary.

#### Meeting with Salem to Discuss Raceway Fire Barrier Wrap Project

On September 23, 1998, the staff of NRR and Region I met with representatives of Public Service Electric & Gas Company (the licensee) to discuss the raceway fire barrier wrap project at Salem Units 1 and 2. Representatives of the Union of Concerned Scientists, Nuclear Information and Resources Service, the State of New Jersey, and a reporter attended the meeting. The licensee described its three-phase project approach (analysis, design, and implementation), and provided the status and progress to date of its post-fire safe shutdown reanalysis, discussed its evaluation of the raceway fire barrier materials currently installed at Salem, and discussed its resolution strategies. The licensee confirmed that its approach and schedule had not changed from the commitments it made during the summer of 1997, prior to plant restart. The staff and the licensee agreed to hold another meeting after it completes the safe shutdown reanalysis (March 1999, time frame).

#### Seabrook

On September 17, 1998, the Commission issued an Order directing the Board to halt all Seabrook proceedings pending further Commission order. The Commission is taking sua sponte review of the segmentation issue raised by the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League (SAPL) and of the Board's intervention rulings. SAPL is opposing a license amendment request submitted by North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation that would change the surveillance requirements for Seabrook's steam generator tube inspections from 18 to 24 months.

September 25, 1998

ENCLOSURE A

### Millstone Unit 3

On August 25, 1998, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) ruled that the Citizens Regulatory Commission (CRC) had standing in the CRC's request to intervene in a Millstone Unit 3 license amendment. The proposed license amendment would revise the Millstone Unit 3 licensing basis by eliminating the requirement to have the recirculation spray system (RSS) directly inject into the reactor coolant system following a design basis accident, with the exception of loss-of-coolant accident (LOCA) scenarios involving a long term passive failure. A prehearing conference (conference call) was held on September 3, 1998, to discuss the contentions. The ASLB stated that they would make the final decision concerning the contentions by the end of September.

On September 2, 1998, the ASLB ruled that the CRC did not have standing in its petition to intervene in a license amendment dated April 1, 1998. The proposed amendment would revise the Millstone Unit 3 licensing basis by adding a new sump pump subsystem in the engineered safety feature (ESF) building to address groundwater inleakage through the containment basemat. On September 11, 1998, the CRC filed a notice of appeal. In its appeal, the CRC stated that the license amendment proposed a band-aid approach to a serious safety issue and the CRC is rightly concerned and possesses a legal right to participate. The licensee and NRC have until September 28, 1998, to respond to the appeal.

### Performance Assessment Process Improvements (IRAP, Industry Proposal, and PIs)

The staff finalized preparations for the September 28 - October 1, 1998, Performance Assessment Workshop. The joint NRC/NEI workshop is open to all members of the public. The workshop agenda is structured to provide discussion and agreement on the philosophical approach to regulatory oversight (cornerstone framework) and defining the principles that should govern oversight process development. In addition, the workshop will provide detailed development of selected cornerstones.

Several meetings were conducted during the week of September 21, 1998, to keep the staff and management informed of the progress made in the assessment improvement effort. The Inspection Program Branch (PIPB) briefed the Executive Director for Operations on September 24, 1998. In addition, on September 25, 1998, PIPB briefed the Commissioners' technical assistants and the regional staff on the upcoming workshop.

September 25, 1998

ENCLOSURE A



### Risk Informed Baseline Core Inspection Program

PIPB developed a staffing plan for engaging internal stakeholders in the rebaselining effort. PIPB briefed the Executive Director for Operations and the Commission Technical Assistants on the plans to rebaseline the core inspection program and the interrelationship with the assessment process and enforcement program. Inspection team members met with the Office of Research (RES) and their contractors to discuss how to keep the RES input integrated with the rebaseline effort.

### Reactor Program System (RPS)

The first five modules of RPS were deployed in the Regions on the client/server platform in March 1998. The Item Reporting (IR) and Analysis Modules (AM) will be deployed on September 28, 1998. The IRAM modules include three main functions, item reporting, analysis capability and the closeout of inspection procedures. IRAM will replace the Inspection Follow-up System (IFS) and the current method of maintaining the Plant Issues Matrix (PIM).

IR is an input vehicle for collecting and storing inspection report item information and independent non-inspection related information (e.g., LERs). Users can generate reports on violations, open items, unresolved issues, etc. Because RPS was designed with an integrated database, it can easily be used to generate the most recent PIM list for an individual plant as well as analyze data in relation to plant characteristics, peer groups, previous time periods, and other regions. IRAM training has been completed in Regions I, II and IV. Region III staff will be trained during the week of October 5.

AM provides both standard reports and graphs, and ad hoc query and report generation capability. The NRR staff is currently working with the regions to identify and develop additional standard reports to support regional and headquarters requirements as well as reports that will support the Operating Plan process.

The requirement and analysis phase of the Licensing and Other Planning (LOP) module, the headquarters part of RPS, which will replace WISP and SIMS, has been completed. Development of this module has started, with deployment planned for late 1999.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

International Conference on the Safety of Radiation Sources and the Security of Radioactive Materials

During September 12-18, 1998, staff of the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety (IMNS) participated in the International Conference on the Safety of Radiation Sources and the Security of Radioactive Materials held in Dijon, France. The international conference was attended by approximately 350 individuals involved with the safety and security of radiation sources. The meeting was sponsored by the International Atomic Energy Agency, INTERPOL, and the World Customs Organization. IMNS staff led the technical session on assessment of the effectiveness of national programs for the safety of sources, including development of performance indicators.

Requested Delay for Fort St. Vrain License Transfer

By letter dated September 14, 1998, the Department of Energy, Idaho Operations Office (DOE-ID), informed staff that it would not be able to declare readiness to accept transfer of the Fort St. Vrain Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation license prior to the staff's planned inspection, scheduled for the week of September 21, 1998. DOE-ID indicated that it needed additional time to address the findings of its recent internal readiness review. DOE-ID proposed that the staff's inspection be rescheduled for the week of November 16, 1998. The staff is in the process of rescheduling the readiness inspection; however, the staff plans to observe and inspect DOE-ID's Fort St. Vrain Emergency Exercise on September 23, 1998. In addition, staff is working to complete its safety evaluation, except any inspection related items, by mid-October 1998. However, based on the delay in staff's closeout inspection, the expected license transfer date will be slipped to mid-December 1998.

Meeting with Transnuclear on the TN-32 Dry Cask Storage Design

On September 17, 1998, management and staff of the Spent Fuel Project Office (SFPO) met with Transnuclear (TN) to discuss the on-going review of the TN-32 dry storage cask application for general license utilization. SFPO conveyed to TN its expectations, approach to licensing reviews, and schedule. TN also presented its approach to addressing several of the staff's issues noted in our request for additional information on the TN-32 cask design. Utility representatives from Virginia Power,

Duke Energy Corporation, and Wisconsin Electric Power Company were present at the meeting.

#### Multi-Agency Radiation Laboratory Protocols Workgroup Meeting

On September 14-17, 1998, staff from the Division of Waste Management and the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, Division of Regulatory Applications, hosted the 15th Multi-Agency Radiation Laboratory Protocols (MARLAP) workgroup meeting. Twenty participants attended the meeting representing several federal agencies which included the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, Department of Defense, National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the U.S. Geological Survey. The MARLAP workgroup revised several MARLAP chapters, discussed numerous technical issues pertaining to radiological laboratory analysis, and discussed integration of the MARLAP manual. The analytical issues discussed included: sample receipt, inspection, and tracking; particulate subsampling and subsample representation; sample preparation for alpha-, beta-, and gamma-counting; the radioanalytical planning process; selection of analytical method using a performance-based approach; and quality assurance/quality control protocols. The MARLAP manual will include 20 chapters; several chapters were completed for inclusion in the manual, others required additional revisions, and a few chapters will need major revision or be rewritten. The MARLAP workgroup intends to meet more frequently (e.g., every 6 weeks) to expedite completion of chapters and integration of the overall manual. The workgroup intends to issue a preliminary draft MARLAP manual for agency review by April 1999.

#### Atlas Site Visit and Public Meeting

On September 16, 1998, staff from the Division of Waste Management accompanied contractors from the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses and the University of Montana on a site visit to the Atlas Corporation uranium mill tailings site near Moab, Utah. The contractors are beginning an effort to model past and future drainage from the Atlas pile and the resultant ground-water contamination. The visit allowed the contractors to become familiar with the site and its environs. Although the site visit was advertised in the local newspaper as open to the public, no member of the public attended. In the afternoon, staff and contractors visited several locations along the Colorado River where a local resident had stated that bank erosion was occurring. The locations were accessed from boats provided by the U.S. National Park Service. Three members of the public, including the individual who had identified the erosion,

participated.

In the evening, a public meeting was held at the local high school. In addition to representatives from the State of Utah and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, about two dozen members of the public attended. Following a brief presentation of the status of the Atlas review, the staff answered questions from the audience for about two hours.

#### Public Meetings on Regulatory Oversight of the White Mesa Uranium Mill

On September 17, 1998, staff from the Division of Waste Management, held two public meetings in southeastern Utah to discuss the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) regulatory oversight of International Uranium Corporation's (IUC's) White Mesa Uranium Mill, which is located near Blanding, Utah. In the first meeting, which was held in Bluff, Utah, the staff met with approximately 65 interested members of the public, which included representatives from and members of the Navajo Nation, a San Juan County (Utah) Commissioner, and members of the media. The second meeting was held in Blanding, Utah, and was attended by approximately 70 individuals, including a member of U.S. House of Representative Chris Cannon's (R-Utah) staff, members of the nearby Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and the media. In addition to addressing NRC's regulatory oversight of the White Mesa mill, the staff discussed its procedures for evaluating applications from uranium mill licensees to process materials other than natural uranium ores. The staff's approval of such applications from IUC has raised local public interest, the most recent being the June 23, 1998, authorization of IUC to receive and process uranium-bearing materials from the formerly utilized sites remedial action project site near Tonawanda, New York.

#### Idaho State University, Pocatello, Idaho

On September 16, 1998, Special Nuclear Material (SNM) License, SNM-1373, for the Idaho State University (ISU), Pocatello, Idaho, was renewed for a 10-year term. This action followed publication of a "Notice of Consideration of License Renewal Request for the Idaho State University and Opportunity for Hearing" in the Federal Register. The license authorizes ISU to use uranium-235 in the form of fuel plates and foils for the study of a subcritical assembly. The work is conducted for education and research to strengthen the existing undergraduate and graduate programs in the areas of nuclear science and engineering.

#### Trilateral Initiative on Released Weapons Program Material

September 25, 1998

ENCLOSURE B

On September 17-18, 1998, a representative of the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards participated in the U.S.-Russia-International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Trilateral Initiative Working Group Meeting held in Vienna, Austria. The Trilateral Initiative Working Group is responsible for preparing bilateral verification agreements which will specify how the IAEA will verify that classified and unclassified plutonium and high-enriched uranium released from the Russian and U.S. weapons programs is not returned to weapons use. The September Working Group Meeting addressed the 1998 Progress Report and the 1999 Work Plan. The documents approved by the Working Group were presented to the U.S. Secretary of Energy, Russian Minister of Atomic Energy, and IAEA Director General on September 22, 1998, for their approval and signature. The current target is to achieve approval of the U.S. and Russian bilateral agreements with the IAEA by September 1999.

#### Workshop Conducted in Kiev, Ukraine

On September 14-16, 1998, a Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards staff member, accompanied by two contractor employees, conducted a workshop on Operational Experience with Older Radioactive Waste Storage and Disposal Facilities in Kiev, Ukraine. The workshop, which was supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development under the Lisbon Initiative, described experience in the U.S. at all operating and formerly operating commercial low-level waste facilities and, where appropriate, significant experience at the Department of Energy operated facilities. The impact of this experience on the licensing and regulatory approach in the U.S. was also discussed. Attendance totaled about thirty, including representatives from the Ukrainian Nuclear Regulatory Administration.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

NAS Panel Convenes "Workshop on Conceptual Models of Flow and Transport in the Fractured Vadose Zone"

At the meeting of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Panel on conceptual models of ground-water flow and contaminant transport, held on September 18, 1998 in Washington, DC, Division of Regulatory Applications staff presented an invited talk on NRC staff's rationale and expectations for an upcoming NAS workshop being supported by NRC RES and DOE grants. The purpose of the workshop is to study the process through which conceptual models, involving radioactive and non-radioactive contaminant transport in the fractured vadose zone, are developed, tested, refined, and reviewed. At the conclusion of the workshop, the NAS Panel will produce a consensus report of its findings and conclusions. Upon receipt of the NAS report, NRC staff will identify technical bases for use in licensing reviews of site characterization and performance assessments. The NRC staff will also review the NAS report for information to assist RES in developing a methodology to evaluate and test conceptual models of groundwater flow and transport. NMSS and CNWRA scientists were invited guests of RES, and participated in the open session discussions. The NAS Panel, consisting of nine prominent scientists and engineers, began planning the scope, topics, and list of invited speakers for the two-day workshop, tentatively set for March 18-19, 1999 in Irvine, California. The workshop attendees will consist of specialists from the hydrogeologic, geochemical, soil science, and related fields who will present and discuss the current state of knowledge, lessons learned from field investigations, and needs for future research. A series of individually authored papers that would be specifically prepared for the workshop will be appended to the NAS report. The report is intended to: provide information on contemporary philosophies, approaches, and techniques for conceptual model building; provide NRC and DOE information on the review of conceptual models; bring together knowledge and experiences from related disciplines; and identify future research needed to further the technical basis for developing and evaluating conceptual models of flow and transport in the fractured vadose zone.

Meeting with the Participants in a Round Robin Exercise to Analyze a Prestressed Concrete Containment Model Being Pressure Tested to Failure

A Containment Model Testing Program is being supported by the

September 25, 1998

ENCLOSURE C

Ministry of Trade and Industry of Japan (MITI) and the NRC. MITI is responsible for the design and construction of the prestressed concrete model and NRC provides the analyses. The organizations performing the work are the Nuclear Power Engineering Corporation (NUPEC) for MITI and SNL for the NRC. A model of a prestressed concrete containment structure is currently under construction at SNL. It will be tested to failure by overpressure in FY 2000.

On September 15 - 18, the NRC project manager and SNL principal investigator met with the European participants as part of a round robin exercise supporting that test program. One objective was to provide an update on construction progress to participants. Another was to answer any questions on a package of as-built model specifications sent to the participants in August 1998. The meetings were productive. The level of interest and activity observed suggests that the round robin will be successful.

The participants included: from the United Kingdom (the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate (NII), Glasgow University and NNC Limited); from France (Institute for Protection and Nuclear Safety (IPSN), the Commissariat a l'Energie Atomique (CEA) and Electricite de France (EDF)); from Spain (Principia); and from Germany (Gesellschaft fur Anlagen und Reaktorsicherheit (GRS)).

The round robin exercise is an integral part of the joint NRC/MITI Containment Model Test Program. In the exercise, each participating organization provides, at their own expense, pre- and post-test calculations. The analyses will determine the ability of state of the art analytical methods to predict the actual failure modes and margins for prestressed concrete containments. Methods of this type are used to predict containment capacities in risk calculations and to estimate degradation effects for aging containment structures.

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS

1. PNO-I-98-044, Horizon Hospital System, POTENTIAL RADIATION OVEREXPOSURE
2. PNO-II-98-040, Georgia Power Co. (Hatch 2), INJURED WORKERS ON SITE - NEWS MEDIA INTEREST
3. PNO-II-98-941, Southern Aluminum Castings, CONTAMINATED MAGNESIUM SCRAP
4. PNO-II-98-042, Florida Power & Light Co. (Turkey Point 3 & 4), PREPARATIONS FOR HURRICANE GEORGES
5. PNO-IV-98-038A, Louisiana License (Global X-Ray), STOLEN INDUSTRIAL RADIOGRAPHY EXPOSURE DEVICE
6. PNO-IV-98-040, Entergy Operations, Inc. (Waterford 3), SHUTDOWN GREATER THAN 72 HOURS
7. PNO-IV-98-041, Southern California Edison & San Diego Gas & Electric Co. (San Onofre 2), PLAT SHUTDOWN GREATER THAN 72 HOURS DUE TO STEAM GENERATOR TUBE LEAKAGE
8. PNO-IV-98-042, Quad Cities Construction Co. DAMAGED MOISTURE DENSITY GAUGE AT A CONSTRUCTION SITE (STATE OF WASHINGTON LICENSEE)
9. PNO-IV-98-043, Siemens Nuclear Power Corporation, DISCOVERY OF APPROXIMATELY 9.2 KG OF SOLID, LOW ENRICHED URANIUM IN DISASSEMBLED DUCTWORK (NRC BULLETIN 91-01 REPORT)



Office of Administration  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

Garage Repair Project

Beginning September 21, 1998, the entrance to the OWFN garage was closed for two weeks to complete the concrete repairs in the entrance drive aisle. All vehicles are now using the TWFN garage exit as both the entrance to and exit from the garage. Additional security guards have been assigned to help direct traffic flow into and within the garage. The OWFN entrance will reopen on October 5, 1998.

Employee Building Satisfaction Survey - Update

More than 35% of the survey forms distributed to NRC Headquarters employees have been completed and returned. Through a contract with GSA, the Gallup Organization is now evaluating the results of the survey and will provide NRC a report by October 30, 1998. Summary results will be provided to NRC employees by mid-November 1998.

Transfer for Disposal and Manifests; Minor Technical Conforming Amendment

A final rule that amends the regulations concerning low-level waste shipment manifest information was published in the Federal Register on September 21, 1998 (63 FR 50127). The final rule makes a number of technical conforming amendments that are needed because the codified regulations reflected a dual implementation procedure established in the March 27, 1995, final rule that established new manifest procedure. This document reflects the fact that the period for the dual procedure has expired and the new requirements are mandatory. The final rule becomes effective November 20, 1998.

Financial Assurance Requirements for Decommissioning Nuclear Power Reactors (Parts 30 and 50)

A final rule that amends the regulations governing financial assurance requirements for the decommissioning of nuclear power reactors was published in the Federal Register on September 22, 1998 (63 FR 50465). The final rule responds to the potential rate deregulation in the power generating industry and NRC concerns regarding whether current decommissioning funding assurance requirements need to be modified. The final rule requires power reactor licensees to submit periodic reports

concerning the status of their decommissioning funds and on changes in their external trust agreements and other financial assurance mechanisms. The final rule becomes effective November 23, 1998.

Financial Protection Requirements for Permanently Shutdown Nuclear Power Reactors (Parts 50 and 140)

A document that solicits additional comments on a proposed rule that would allow licensees of permanently shutdown nuclear power reactors to reduce onsite and offsite insurance coverage was published in the Federal Register on September 23, 1998 (63 FR 50815). The action is taken in response to a late comment letter from the Nuclear Energy Institute that argued for a lower required level of onsite insurance coverage. The comment period on this action closes September 23, 1998.

Chief Information Officer  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during  
the 5-Day Period of September 18, 1998 - September 24, 1998:

IMPAC list. (FOIA/PA-98-349)

Point Beach, allegations/investigation of named individual  
regarding 5/13/98 incident. (FOIA/PA-98-350)

Environmental Qualification of Equipment, Main Steam Line Break  
Effect on (IE Information Notice 84-90). (FOIA/PA-98-351)

Browns Ferry, TVA, internal correspondence re Inspection Rpt 50-  
259/97-0401. (FOIA/PA-98-352)

White Mesa mill, environmental impact statement and/or  
assessments. (FOIA/PA-98-353)

Isotopes Specialties Co, 703 South Main St., Burbank, CA.  
(FOIA/PA-98-354)

Named individuals, radiation exposure records. (FOIA/PA-98-355)

Contracts, active listing for identified SIC codes.  
(FOIA/PA-98-356)

Pathfinder Atomic Plant, final survey report, available June  
1993. (FOIA/PA-98-357)

Office of Human Resources  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

<b>Arrivals</b>		
BIANCHI, Josephine*	Secretary	HR
<b>Retirements</b>		
AUSTIN, John	Chief, PAHL	NMSS
TOMS, Dean	Information Security Specialist	ADM

\*Transferring from Region IV

Office of Small Business & Civil Rights  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

Minority Enterprise Development Week

On September 21, 1998, Von Deloatch, Small Business Program Manager, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights, participated in the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual National Minority Enterprise Development Week (MEDWEEK). The theme for this year's event was, "Creating A Competitive Advantage In A Changing Business Environment." Approximately 2,500 minority business owners from across the country attended and participated in the seminars and workshops. A Procurement Partnership Pavilion was added to this year's activities, with a focus on procurement and purchasing in Federal agencies. The Honorable William M. Dailey, Secretary of Commerce, one of the keynote speakers at the event, provided his support for "minority-owned businesses to have an equal opportunity to compete in the global marketplace."

National Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Week Conference

Mr. Deloatch also attended the National HBCU Week Conference on September 22, 1998, held in Washington, DC. Presidents of HBCU's, Deans of Research Programs, and other faculty members were in attendance. Two panel topics that generated a great deal of discussion were: "Preparing Young People for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce" and "Current and Future Trends in Federal Research Activities. The event was highlighted by presentations from four Cabinet Secretaries: Secretary of Education, Richard Riley; Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman; Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater; and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Andrew M. Cuomo.

Office of Public Affairs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

Media Interest

Jennifer Barsky, a new reporter at the Energy Daily, interviewed Tom Boyce, Alan Madison, Dave Gamberoni, Michael Johnson, NRR, and Mike Tschiltz, OEDO, about the SALP program.

There was media interest in New England about the Commission's decision to halt proceedings in the Seabrook license amendment case. The press also reported on the Nine Mile Point meeting discussing delay of the next core shroud inspection.

There was press coverage of the Y2K audits at some reactors.

<b>Press Releases</b>	
<b>Headquarters:</b>	
98-172	NRC Auditing Nuclear Power Plant Year 2000 Readiness Programs
98-173	Commission Orders Halt to Proceedings in Seabrook License Amendment Case
98-174	Commission Grants Group More Time to File Contentions in Calvert Cliffs License Renewal Case
98-175	NRC Recommends Extension, Modification of Price-Anderson Act to Continue Public Liability Coverage
<b>Regions:</b>	
I-98-109	Barry Letts Received NRC Meritorious Service Award for Investigating Excellence
II-98-56	NRC Names New Senior Resident Inspector at Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant
IV-98-36	NRC California Field Office to Close September 30

Office of the Secretary  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending September 25, 1998

Documents Released to Public	Date	Subject
<b>Decision Documents</b>		
1. SECY-98-160	7/2/98	NRC'S 1998 Report to Congress on the Price-Anderson Act
SRM on 98-160	9/14/98	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-160	9/14/98	(same)
<b>Negative Consent Documents</b>		
1. SECY-98-206	9/1/98	National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council Grant to Fund the Biological Effects of Ionization Radiation Study Number VII (BEIR VII)
SRM on 98-206	9/24/98	(same)
<b>Memoranda</b>		
1. M980826B	9/22/98	Staff Requirements - Briefing on Status of Activities with Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analysis and HLW Program, Wednesday, August 26, 1998

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to President of the U.S. Senate Albert Gore, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Newt Gingrich, and Robert Murphy, GAO, dated September 18, 1998 provides final amendments to the Commission's rules in 10 CFR Parts 30 and 50, "Financial Assurance Requirements for Decommissioning Nuclear Power Reactors."
2. Letter to W.R. McCollum, Jr., Oconee Nuclear Site, dated September 17, 1998 concerns a request for an exemption from a duplicative license fee (Incoming dated July 9, 1998 also

released).

3. Letter to Senator Richard Bryan dated September 17, 1998 concerns the safety of high-level radioactive waste disposal at Yucca Mountain (Incoming dated July 21, 1998 also released).
4. Letter to President of the U.S. Senate Albert Gore and Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Newt Gingrich dated September 17, 1998 provides the NRC's Report to Congress on the Price-Anderson Act.
5. Letter to Lars Högberg, Swedish Nuclear Power Inspectorate, dated September 17, 1998 confirms that Carlton Stoiber, OIP, will be attending the Organizational Meeting of Contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (Incoming dated September 11, 1998 also released).
6. Letter to Senator Pete Domenici, et al., dated September 16, 1998 concerns the House and Senate versions of the NRC's appropriation bill (H.R. 4060).

#### Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Procedures for Meetings.
2. Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste; Procedures for Meetings.
3. 10 CFR Part 50; Monitoring the Effectiveness of Maintenance at Nuclear Power Plants; Proposed Rule.

#### Historical Research

Sam Walker, NRC Historian, spent the week of September 21 conducting research in the papers of Morris K. Udall, which have recently opened at the library of the University of Arizona in Tucson. He copied several hundred pages of material, mostly on the period between the fall of 1971 and the end of 1979. The Udall papers are a very large and rich collection that supplied much information that is not available elsewhere on congressional perspectives on Three Mile Island, safeguards, and NRC activities in general.



Region I  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

Nine Mile Point Units 1 and 2

Two public meetings (reference NRR Meeting Notices 1998-0934 and 0935) with Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NMPC) were held at the State University of New York - Oswego campus, on September 24, 1998, to discuss NMPC's request for an extension to its Unit 1 core shroud vertical weld inspection interval from 10,600 hours to 14,500 hours of hot operations. The first meeting was between the NMPC and NRC staffs. The second meeting was between the NRC and public to receive comments and questions on NMPC's request. The meetings were prompted by public interest and concern over the as-found condition of core shroud welds at both NMPC units.

Beaver Valley Unit 2

Beaver Valley Unit 2 is preparing to start up after a 9-month maintenance outage. Unit 2 shut down on December 16, 1997, due to inability to meet single failure criteria for the control room emergency ventilation system. The unit remained shut down to address problems with technical specification surveillance compliance, high head safety injection gas binding and containment isolation check valve binding.

Unit 2 entered Mode 3 on September 24. The licensee's current schedule indicates reactor criticality on September 25, with synchronization on September 26.

IMPEP Review on the Maine Radiological Health Program (RHP)

During the week of September 14, 1998, an Integrated Material Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP) review was conducted on the Maine Radiological Health Program (RHP). The three-member review team consisted of the Regional State Agreements Officers from Regions I and III and the Radioactive Materials Supervisor from the State of Mississippi. Preliminary findings were presented to Maine Department of Health management on September 18 by the review team. The team's preliminary findings for the six performance indicators included four "satisfactory" and two "satisfactory with recommendation" and an overall finding that the Maine RHP was adequate and compatible. The team's findings will be reviewed and assessed later this year by the Management Review Board.

Financial Assurance Training

September 25, 1998

ENCLOSURE P

Staff from NMSS and contractor personnel presented training on financial assurance requirements for NMSS licensees at the Region I offices on October 23, 1998. In addition to RI personnel, representatives of Agreement and non-Agreement States, including Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York and Arkansas, attended.

September 25, 1998

ENCLOSURE P

Region II  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending September 25, 1998

Hurricane Georges

Florida Power and Light Company - Turkey Point

Florida Power and Light Company declared an unusual event on September 24 when a hurricane warning was issued for the area. Unit 3 had shutdown on September 21 for a refueling outage. The licensee reduced power in Unit 4 to 50 percent in anticipation of potential debris or grass intrusion into the intake canal. Hurricane Georges passed over Key West on September 28. Turkey Point experienced approximately 40 mph winds and periods of heavy rain. Region II staffed its Incident Response Center and dispatched personnel to the site, the Florida Power and Light Emergency Operations facility and the State Emergency Operations Center.

Material Licensees in Puerto Rico

Widespread power, water, and telephone outages remain in Puerto Rico from Hurricane Georges. No reports of problems from NRC licensees in Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands have been received. RII communicated with the two irradiators in Puerto Rico (Baxter and Isomedix); no damage occurred to either and both have restarted.

Office of Congressional Affairs  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending September 25, 1998

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, <u>NO. 30</u>					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Portner	10/01/98 406 DSOB  TENTATIVE	11:00	Greta Dicus, Jeff Merrifield	Confirmation Hearing to be NRC Commissioners	Senators Chafee/Baucus Environment and Public Works
Gerke	10/02/98 192 DSOB	9:30	TBA	Y2K and General Government Emergency Preparedness	Senators Bennett/Dodd Special Y2K Computer Problem
Gerke	10/02/98 2322 RHOB	10:00	TBA	Energy Security: What Will the New Millennium Bring?	Reps. Schaefer/Hall Energy and Power Commerce