

November 25, 1998

SECY 98-276

For: The Commissioners

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

Subject: /s/
WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER
20, 1998

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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 November 20, 1998

Seabrook 1 - Hearing Update

Earlier this year, North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation (NAESCO) submitted 4 license amendment requests to change the interval of a variety of surveillance tests from 18 months to 24 months. Subsequently, the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League (SAPL) opposed the change and the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel granted intervention. The Commission took sua sponte review of the issues and of the Board's rulings. NAESCO and SAPL entered into negotiations to resolve the issues outside of a hearing. However, the parties failed to settle the case and on October 15, 1998, counsel for NAESCO filed a motion to withdraw all 4 of the subject amendment requests and to terminate the proceedings. The staff is waiting for a decision from the Commission.

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 directly inject into the reactor coolant system following a design basis accident, with the exception of loss-of-coolant accident scenarios involving a long term passive failure. A prehearing conference (conference call) was held on September 3, 1998, to discuss the contentions.

On November 12, 1998, the ASLB ruled that the CRC's contentions were outside the scope of the license amendment and, in addition, failed to meet the regulatory requirements for admissibility. Therefore, the CRC's contentions were rejected. Since the CRC has no admissible contention, the CRC is precluded from participating as a party in the license amendment proceeding. The CRC's intervention petition was, therefore, dismissed and the proceeding terminated. The CRC has 10 days from the date of the Order to appeal the decision to the Commission.

Perry Nuclear Power Plant

On November 9, 1998, the Union of Concerned Scientists submitted a petition, pursuant to 10 CFR 2.206, to shut down the Perry facility due to the apparent existence of two pinhole fuel pin

leaks. The basis for the request is that the existence of fuel pin leaks is outside of the design and licensing bases. The UCS submitted a similar petition for multiple fuel pin leaks for the River Bend facility.

On September 2, 1998, the Perry licensee detected an increase in the long-lived isotope Xe-133 in the offgas pretreatment steam, indicating the existence of a pinhole leak in a fuel rod. The leak was subsequently suppressed by fully inserting four control rods into the core. In addition, the licensee implemented administrative procedures to limit power changes to less than or equal to one percent per hour to prevent further degradation to the fuel pin.

On October 28, 1998, the licensee identified a second increase in noble gas thus indicating a second pinhole leak in a fuel rod. The second leak was determined to be non-symmetrical and was suppressed by fully inserting two additional control rods into the core.

No obvious cause of the failures can be determined at this time. The most common cause of fuel failures among BWRs is debris-induced fretting. The Perry facility has been operating at essentially full power since the fall 1997 refueling outage. The next refueling outage is scheduled for April 1999. Operation with six fully inserted control rods will complicate fuel burnup, alter rod patterns, and lengthen coastdown. The licensee remains in close contact with both River Bend and GE regarding the issue.

D.C. Cook Units 1 and 2

The licensee has completed the repairs to the Unit 1 ice condenser. These repairs included replacing all missing and broken screws, repairing bent and damaged ice baskets and removing all foreign material from the ice condenser. The licensee will be commencing the cooldown of the ice condenser in anticipation of reloading it with ice. The cooldown and the reloading of the ice condenser will take approximately 12 days. The licensee has produced enough ice stored at an off-site facility to reload the ice basket without having to produce any ice at the facility.

D.C. COOK 0350 Restart Panel Meeting

The sixth 0350-Restart Panel public meeting will be held at the D. C. Cook site on November 18, 1998. The agenda for the meeting will include a discussion of the case-specific checklist, and an assessment from Robert Powers of engineering issues. The status

of restart licensing will also be discussed.

Quad Cities Unit 1

Quad Cities Unit 1 is in day 12 of a 30 day scheduled refueling outage. During UT inspections of the reactor recirculation piping welds it was discovered that 7 welds have crack indications. Two of the indications were seen during the last outage and they have not grown. One weld looked at during the last outage has a circumferential indication that has grown from 22" to 45". This flaw was evaluated by calculation and considered to be acceptable for an additional 5 years of operation in 1996. This flaw now has increased to greater than allowed by code which has necessitated a weld overlay. There are also four other welds that have indications that will need to be evaluated. The inspection scope has been expanded to 100 percent of the welds and there remains nineteen welds to be inspected. All indications have been on 28" pipe that were stress improved in 1984 by a process of induction heating stress improvement (IHSI). The staff will review any flaw evaluations performed by the licensee before unit restart scheduled for December 5, 1998. The staff also is in discussions with the licensee regarding the root cause of why the one weld had increased in length faster than projected. The licensee has contracted with GE and EPRI to help with the evaluation.

November 17, 1998 Meeting With Brunswick on Balance of Plant/Emergency Bus Circuit Allowed Outage Time Extension

The staff and the licensee for Brunswick Steam Electric Plant Units 1 & 2 held a meeting on November 17, 1998, to discuss a risk-informed technical specification (TS) submittal. The licensee's submittal requests an extension of the allowed outage time (AOT) for a balance of plant (BOP) and 4kv bus circuit from 24 hours and 8 hours, respectively, to 7 days on a shutdown unit while the opposite unit remains at power. A BOP/4kv bus circuit outage affects equipment on both units since the emergency 4kv buses are shared. The meeting addressed both deterministic and risk aspects of the TS submittal. The licensee's primary objective in the TS request is to perform preventive maintenance on the electrical buses; however, other work could be performed simultaneously such as a teardown of the dedicated emergency diesel generator. It was noted in the meeting that the licensee's primary objective could be accomplished in a much shorter time (36 hours) than the proposed 7 day AOT. The licensee indicated that they would evaluate the possibility of a shorter AOT extension request. In addition, consistent with the guidance provided to the staff by the Risk Informed Licensing

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Panel, the need for a configuration risk management program (CRMP) or an appropriate alternative which is enforceable was discussed. The licensee indicated that they would supply the staff with an alternative to the CRMP for evaluation. The staff's review of this TS request is continuing, with a target date for completion on December 31, 1998.

Comanche Peak Charging Pump Allowed Outage Time Extension

On November 13, 1998, the Probabilistic Safety Assessment Branch (SPSB) completed its assessment of the risk associated with the proposed Comanche Peak Steam and Electric Station, Units 1 and 2 (CPSES) allowed outage time (AOT) extension for charging pumps. The extended AOT would provide operational flexibility when performing corrective maintenance at power. SPSB used a three-tiered approach, consistent with RG 1.177, to evaluate the risk associated with the proposed license amendment. Based on the review, SPSB did not identify any significant weaknesses or deficiencies associated with the licensee's risk analysis used to support the proposed change that could impact the overall quantitative conclusion. The CPSES probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) used in support of the proposed change was of sufficient quality, scope and level of detail for the proposed application, and the risk impact of the proposed change would be small. In addition to the current technical specification restrictions, the licensee developed additional restrictions or compensatory measures in work control procedures to avoid or minimize potential high risk configurations. The licensee also committed to submitting a configuration risk management program (CRMP), consistent with RG 1.177, that provides reasonable tools and processes for configurational risk control during charging pump outages. Therefore, SPSB concluded that the PRA findings and insights supported the charging pump AOT extension from 3 to 7 days. This is a plant-specific licensing Tasking Memo item that has been scheduled to be completed in November.

Sequoyah Emergency Diesel Generator Allowed Outage Time Extension

On November 6, 1998, SPSB completed its assessment of the risk associated with the proposed Sequoyah Units 1 and 2 emergency diesel generator (EDG) allowed outage time (AOT) extension request. The extended AOT would allow on-line EDG maintenance activities that are normally performed during shutdown. Probabilistic Safety Assessment Branch (SPSB) used a three-tiered approach, consistent with RG 1.177, to evaluate the risk. Based on the review, SPSB did not identify any significant weaknesses or deficiencies associated with the licensee's risk analysis used to support the proposed change that could impact the overall

quantitative conclusion. The probabilistic risk assessment methodology and approach used to estimate the risk impact were reasonable, and the risk impact of the proposed change was found to be small. The licensee also has a configuration risk management program (CRMP) that provides reasonable tools and processes for configurational risk control during emergency diesel generator (EDG) outages. SPSB concluded that the PRA findings and insights supported the EDG AOT extension from 3 to 7 days, and the overall risk impact of the proposed change met the intent of the criteria and guidelines used in the Regulatory Guides 1.174 and 1.177. This is a plant-specific licensing Tasking Memo item that has been scheduled to be completed by June 1999.

Management Changes

The licensee announced that Mr. Michael W. Rencheck will become the Vice President, Nuclear Engineering, reporting directly to Robert Powers, Senior Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer. Before joining D. C. Cook, Mr. Rencheck most recently was the Director, Nuclear Engineering and Projects, at Florida Power Corporation's Crystal River Nuclear Station. Rick Eckstein, the current Chief Nuclear Engineer, an INPO reverse loanee, will continue in his role until Mr. Rencheck assumes his new position.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Nuclear Materials Management Safeguards System

On November 17, 1998, the Nuclear Materials Management Safeguards System (NMMSS) Steering Committee met to discuss a number of issues related to the operation of NMMSS. A number of items of importance to Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) licensees were discussed and actions agreed upon. A cost estimate and implementation plan is to be completed by early 1999, responding to industry's request for flexibility in more accurate reporting of quantities of natural and depleted uranium being transferred and stored by NRC licensees. Another action is to identify the necessary steps and develop an implementation plan allowing NRC licensees to perform direct electronic submission of their data to the NMMSS operator.

10 CFR Part 70 Task Force

On November 12, 1998, the Task Force members met with the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards to gain insight regarding the proposed 10 CFR Part 70 rule, to discuss the concerns expressed about the rule by the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), and to develop potential solutions to those concerns, concentrating primarily on the Integrated Safety Analysis (ISA) and how changes are made to the ISA. An issue sheet is being developed to: concisely describe each issue and the NEI and Nuclear Regulatory Commission current positions on the issue; list questions and answers to assist in resolving the issue; and outline potential alternatives to resolving the differences among the concerned parties.

Susquehanna Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation Preparation

On November 18, 1998, staff from the Spent Fuel Project Office met with representatives from the Pennsylvania Power and Light Company (PP&L) to discuss construction and operation of a NUHOMS-52B based Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation at Susquehanna Steam Electric Station. PP&L discussed the schedule for completion of necessary licensing reviews and construction activities. PP&L also discussed its interaction with, and oversight of, the NUHOMS vendor, Transnuclear West (TN West), as TN West begins fabrication of storage canisters for Susquehanna. PP&L plans to load its first canister in August 1999.

Department of Energy Declares Readiness for Nuclear Regulatory Commission Inspection

By letter dated November 16, 1998, the Department of Energy-Idaho Operations Office (DOE-ID) informed the staff that it is prepared for a Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) readiness inspection to support transfer of the Fort St. Vrain Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation license to DOE-ID. DOE-ID stated that the declaration of readiness was based on a series of internal readiness reviews performed by DOE and its management and operations contractor in recent months. DOE-ID indicated that, pending a satisfactory NRC inspection and resolution of several minor licensing issues, it believes a transfer of the license by the end of December 1998 is achievable. The NRC staff currently plans to conduct a readiness inspection during the week of November 30, 1998.

Inspection of Spent Fuel Storage Activities at Transnuclear West

On November 8-16, 1998, the Spent Fuel Project Office conducted a safety team inspection to assess Transnuclear West's (TN West) (previously, VECTRA Technologies, Inc.) readiness to resume fabrication of the Nutech Horizontal Modular Storage Systems (NUHOMS) at its corporate facility in Fremont, California. This was a follow-up inspection to review corrective actions proposed by TN West in response to issues identified in a Demand for Information letter issued as the result of numerous Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) inspection findings involving problems with the company's design control and quality assurance (QA) programs.

The inspection focused on ensuring that TN West had developed the programs and processes necessary to resume fabrication of the NUHOMS systems. As a result of this inspection, the team concluded that TN West has developed sufficient programs to resolve initial NRC concerns associated with its QA and design control programs. The team found that TN West had sufficiently implemented their commitment to resume full fabrication of NUHOMS systems. The team presented its inspection findings to TN West on November 16, 1998.

Meeting with Environmental Protection Agency and the Steel Manufacturer's Association on Clearance and Orphan Source Issues

On November 12, 1998, the Offices of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards and Nuclear Regulatory Research participated in a meeting in Crystal City, Virginia, between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Environment Committee of the

Steel Manufacturer's Association (SMA). SMA was interested in discussing three items: clearance rulemaking activities, orphan sources, and radiologically-contaminated dust at steel mills. The EPA staff and contractors presented a technical approach that would form the basis of a standard for clearance levels in recycled metals, if EPA proceeds with clearance rulemaking. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff informed the group of Commission Paper SECY-98-028; the corresponding June 30, 1998, Staff Requirements Memorandum; the status of the NRC's technical basis document on clearance; and presented information on the orphan source program. Staff of the Department of Energy also attended and participated in the meeting.

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Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
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Severe Accident Research in Japan Workshop

The Severe Accident Research in Japan (SARJ-98) workshop was held in Tokyo, Japan, on November 4-6, 1998, under the sponsorship of Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute (JAERI) and Nuclear Power Engineering Corporation (NUPEC). A staff member from the Division of Systems Technology represented the NRC at the workshop. Participation in the workshop was in keeping with the international collaboration on severe accident research in the framework of the Cooperative Severe Accident Research Program (CSARP) arrangement between the NRC and JAERI. The workshop was attended by over one hundred and sixty participants including thirty from overseas countries. Participation in international activities such as this one is a cost-effective way for the NRC staff to benefit from the results of severe accident research in other countries.

The objective of the workshop was to share the progress made in the field of severe accident research by Japan and other countries, and to identify those areas where further research is needed to reduce remaining uncertainties. Sixty-five papers were presented in eleven parallel sessions and an overview session. Topics covered in the parallel technical sessions were: in-vessel retention, fuel-coolant interactions (FCI) and ex-vessel coolability, fission product behavior, fuel behavior (core degradation), hydrogen behavior, accident analysis and modeling, and structural integrity. Additionally, on the last day of the meeting, a panel session was organized to discuss the status of current analysis tools in relation to the present state of knowledge of severe accident phenomena and remaining uncertainties therein. It was evident from the technical session presentations as well as from the panel discussion that sufficient progress has been made in some areas to bring the pertinent issues to a closure (such as direct containment heating for PWR's). Corium coolability (both in-vessel and ex-vessel) and the related issue of FCI were identified as areas requiring further progress to reduce remaining uncertainties. A mixed view was presented on the status of current analytical tools. It was generally agreed that all codes require additional assessment and, based on improved knowledge of phenomena, an appropriate level of further development to attain a higher level of maturity and robustness.

Nuclear Energy Research Advisory Committee

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On November 18, 1998, Charles Ader of RES attended the Department of Energy's Nuclear Energy Research Advisory Committee. This committee was formed by the Department's Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology to assist the Department in carrying out its role in nuclear energy research. The committee, is chaired by Professor James Duderstadt of the University of Michigan, and consists of 24 expert members from a wide variety of research backgrounds and perspectives, including national laboratories, universities, the Nuclear Energy Institute and the Natural Resources Defense Council. As this was the first meeting of the advisory committee, the purpose of this two day meeting (November 17 and 18) was primarily organizational and to provide an overview of various Department programs. Issues the committee is being ask to address over the next year include: 1) long-term direction for DOE Nuclear Energy program; 2) what should be the role of DOE in nuclear energy technology in the future vis-à-vis industry; 3) advice on assuring a viable technology infrastructure to meet U.S. research and development requirements; 4) long-term direction for DOE Isotope Program; and 5) long-term technology needs associated with current plants. It is likely that the NRC may be requested to send an ex-officio member to attend the advisory committee meetings.

Halden Project - USNRC/RES Staff Elected Chair of Program Group

Dr. J. J. Persensky, Control, Instrumentation and Human Factors Branch, RES, was elected Chair of the Halden Program Group (HPG) for 1999. He was elected at the 118th meeting of the HPG on November 4, 1998, which was held in Madrid, Spain. He will succeed J. Alonso Pachceo of ENUSA, Spain. The Halden Program Group consists of over 40 representatives from the 20 international signatories as well as associated parties that sponsor the OECD Halden Reactor Project (HRP). As Chair, Dr. Persensky will lead the HPG in their efforts to provide technical direction to the HRP staff in the development of technical programs in the areas of fuels and materials and man-machine interface. A major part of the effort will be focused on planning the 2000-2002 research program which will serve as the basis for the next three year international agreement among the signatories. This program will focus on high-burn-up fuel, irradiation-assisted stress corrosion, ATWS- related power oscillations, advanced control room design, human error prediction, software reliability, and the development of computerized operator support systems. In his role as Chair, he can assure that the program focuses on issues that are relevant to the NRC while taking advantage of the leverage associated with multi-national funding. The US has been a signatory to the HRP since 1958. The research conducted there has provided

technical bases and confirmatory findings for numerous NRC issues in the past. Bernard Gautier of EdF will serve as Vice-chairman.

Fuel Behavior

RES recently reported on the annual program review of NRC's hot-cell program on cladding metallurgy at high burnup. The purpose of this program is to assess the adequacy of regulatory criteria and models (10 CFR 50.46 and Appendix K) for LOCA analysis at high burnup and to develop basic mechanical properties of cladding that are needed to analyze safety transients with high burnup fuel. EPRI is playing an active role in the project and, in particular, EPRI is working with its utility members to provide PWR and BWR fuel rods to be tested in the program. During the third week of November, a fuel bundle skeleton with ten high-burnup fuel rods was being loaded into an NEC shipping cask at the Limerick plant (BWR) when minor problems were encountered. There were also believed to be some irregularities in the procedures for this operation, so the operation was halted. Because of the tight schedule related to an impending fuel reload, another attempt to ship fuel from Limerick for the NRC research program will not be made until next year. This delay followed the earlier cancellation of efforts to arrange for PWR fuel rods from the Palo Verde plant. Temporary repairs in the fuel pool area made acquisition of those fuel rods impractical. Efforts are now being accelerated to identify and acquire alternate PWR fuel rods and to minimize any schedule slippages in the research program.

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Assessment of Loss of Offsite Power at U.S. Nuclear Power Plants

The Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data has issued the final report "Evaluation of Loss of Offsite Power Events at Nuclear Power Plants: 1980-1996," NUREG/CR-5496. The final report incorporated comments and suggestions obtained during internal and external review, including industry, of the draft report. The objective of this study was to update the loss of offsite power (LOSP) estimates (frequency and duration) found in NUREG-1032, "Evaluation of Station Blackout Accidents at Nuclear Power Plants," which spanned the time period from 1969 to 1985. This study used the same data classification scheme as in NUREG-1032, (i.e., plant-centered, grid, and severe weather-related events). In addition to estimating LOSP frequency and duration during power operation, the study also estimated the LOSP frequency and duration during shutdown.

Notable observations and findings of the study include the following:

Plant-centered events clearly dominate LOSP frequency during power operation (0.04 per unit critical year), as well as during non-power modes of operation (0.18 per unit shutdown year). Events induced by severe weather are much less frequent (0.01 per site calendar year), and grid-related events are still less frequent (0.004 per site calendar year).

The LOSP frequency from grid-related events in the period covered by this report, 1980-1996, was very small. The frequency of grid-related LOSP events is less than that found in the period studied in NUREG-1032 by a factor of about 10. No grid-related events occurred in the 1990s, in spite of the occurrence of several widespread losses of power to the public.

The frequency of LOSP events due to severe weather exhibited statistically significant site-to-site variability. This is to be expected, as some power plants' geographic location will tend to have increased their exposure to severe weather.

The majority of plant-centered LOSP initiating events at power were caused by equipment faults (58%), with a smaller portion being induced by human error (23%). During shutdown modes, the opposite holds, with human errors being the major contributor (58%).

As found by the NUREG-1032 study, the recovery times of sustained LOSP events were significantly longer for severe-weather events than for plant-centered events. Too few grid-related events occurred during the period (1980-1996) of this more current report to permit comparison of their recovery times with plant-centered or severe-weather recovery times. AEOD made the following recommendations in their letter announcing publication of the report:

- Inspectors should be made aware of the relatively higher likelihood of offsite power losses during shutdown and the contributors to those events so that inspection activities can be more risk-informed.
- In light of the extremely small contribution of grid-induced events to the LOSP frequency and the ability to monitor grid-induced LOSP events as a performance indicator of grid reliability, no further regulatory action is needed related to the Task 4 assessment in the task action plan on grid reliability.

NUREG/CR-4674, "Precursors to Potential Severe Core Damage Accidents: 1997 A Status Report"

The 1997 Precursor Report has been completed by the Accident Sequence Precursor (ASP) Program, and approved for publication. For 1997, five operational events and conditions were identified as precursors. This is the lowest number of precursors for any year since 1971 (the program's precursor data cover the period 1969-1997). There were no precursors which had a conditional core damage probability (CCDP) $\geq 1.0 \times 10^{-4}$. This was the first year since the ASP program was established that no precursor had a CCDP $\geq 1.0 \times 10^{-4}$. None of the 1997 precursors occurred at boiling-water reactors. Two of the 1997 precursors involved event initiators; three involved the unavailability of equipment. One of the precursors involved a loss of offsite power. The report, which will be published as NUREG/CR-4674, Volume 26, should be printed and distributed by the middle of December.

Public meeting (tabletop exercise) on event reporting rulemaking

On November 13, 1998, a public meeting (tabletop exercise) was held to test the contemplated reporting rules and guidelines for clarity and consistency, early in the process of drafting them, by discussing how reportability decisions could be made for a sample of events. This meeting was an additional step added to the rulemaking schedule at the request of industry representatives. Attendees included headquarters and regional

NRC staff, industry representatives, and two employees of GAO. Industry representatives were well prepared for the meeting and provided organized comments that will help improve the quality of the proposed rule and guidelines.

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-I-98-051, New Hampshire Yankee (Seabrook 1), REACTOR SHUTDOWN IN EXCESS OF 72 HOURS
2. PNO-1-98-052, Brown University, INTENTIONAL INGESTION OF IODINE-125 TAINTED FOOD
3. PNO-98-054, New York Power Authority (Indian Pont 3), UNPLANNED REACTOR SHUTDOWN GREATER THAN 72 HOURS
4. PNO-III-98-055, Detroit Edison Co. (Fermi 2), SHUTDOWN TO REPAIR STEAM LEAK
5. PNO-IV-98-051, Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (Wolf Creek 1), FLOODING IN THE VICINITY OF WOLF CREEK GENERATING STATION
6. PNO-IV-98-052, International Radiography & Inspection Services, Inc., INDUSTRIAL RADIOGRAPHY OVEREXPOSURE
7. PNO-IV-98-052A, International Radiography & Inspection Services, Inc., INDUSTRIAL RADIOGRAPHY OVEREXPOSURE -- UPDATE
8. PNO-IV-98-053, State of Arizona Licensee, Maxim Technologies, Inc. MOISTURE DENSITY GAUGE STOLEN FROM RESIDENT
9. PNO-IV-98-054, Entergy Operations, Inc. (Waterford 3), PLANT SHUTDOWN GREATER THAN 72 HOURS
10. PNO-IV-98-055, California Licensee (Industrial Nuclear Company), DISCOVERY OF HIGH EXPOSURE RATES ON OUTSIDE OF SHIPPING CONTAINER CARRYING IRRIDIUM-192 (R-192) RADIOGRAPHY SOURCE

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Waiver of Commerce Business Daily (CBD) Synopsis Requirements for Simplified Acquisitions

On November 5, 1998, the Administrators of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) approved the EDO's request to waive the CBD synopsis requirement for procurements under the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$100,000). This waiver will allow NRC to solicit offers for goods and services valued at up to \$100,000 from five (small business) sources without synopsising in the CBD. Previously, NRC was required to synopsis procurements in excess of \$25,000. This waiver which may be used in connection with acquisition of any goods or services required by the Agency, will save up to 20 days in the procurement process.

Waiver of Commerce Business Daily (CBD) Synopsis Requirements For Certain Technical Assistance and Research

OFPP recently approved the EDO's request for a two-year extension to NRC's waiver of the CBD synopsis requirement for research and technical assistance contracts. The waiver, which the Administrator, SBA also approved, allows NRC to procure certain technical assistance and research work from known sources who possess the capability to fulfill NRC's needs without synopsising the requirement in the CBD. Use of this waiver can save up to 30 days for each competitive procurement to which it is applied by eliminating the synopsis lead time and the additional time and effort expended by Source Evaluation Panels in evaluating proposals that have no reasonable chance for award.

White Flint Concrete Repair Project

Work to repair deteriorating concrete sidewalks around the White Flint complex began November 19, 1998. The work is expected to continue for four weeks and will include replacement of large sections of sidewalks, repairs to spalling edges of selected areas of pavement, repairs of cracks, and replacement of joint sealant.

Garage Repair Project

The Garage Repair Project moves to the next phase on November 20, 1998, at 6:00 p.m. This phase will require the OWFN ramps to be closed for a two week period. During this time, all vehicles

will use the TWFN garage ramps. Signs in the garage will mark the new traffic pattern. In addition, security guards will provide directional assistance to facilitate traffic movement in the garage during the peak two-way traffic period from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Rulemaking Activities for the Week Ending November 20, 1998 --
Criticality Accident Requirements (Parts 50 and 70)

A final rule that amends the regulations to provide light-water nuclear power reactor licensees with greater flexibility in meeting the requirement that licensees authorized to possess more than a small amount of special nuclear material maintain a criticality monitoring system in each area where the material is handled, used, or stored was published in the Federal Register on November 12, 1998 (63 FR 63127). The action is taken as a result of experience gained in processing and evaluating a number of exemption requests from power reactor licensees and NRC's safety assessments in response to these requests. The final rule becomes effective December 14, 1998.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during
the 5-Day Period of November 13, 1998 - November 19, 1998:

Vacancy announcement #9848036, Management Analyst. (FOIA/PA 99-040)

Turbine stop valves, 11/14/86 Bernaro memo re interpretation of response time on limit switches. (FOIA/PA 99-041)

Inspection hours, special design inspections performed to date. (FOIA/PA 99-042)

Self, IG case. (FOIA/PA 99-043)

Pilgrim Power Station, license transfer submittals past year. (FOIA/PA 99-044)

Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Co., Bloomfield, NJ, radiological survey reports on buildings nos. 7, 8 and 9. (FOIA/PA 99-045)

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
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Arrivals		
RODRIGUEZ, Javier	Reactor Engineer	RIV
STAUSS, Lynne	Special Assistant to Commissioner Merrifield	OCM
Departures		
LEONHARDT, Judith	Auditor	OIG
PARRA, Santiago	Nuclear Engineer	NMSS
VORA, Sangeeta	Attorney	OGC

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
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Media Interest

HQ responded to calls from the ABC-TV affiliate in Detroit which is preparing a story on potassium iodide. HQ also responded to inquiries from USA Today on a story about spent fuel storage.

Both HQ and Region IV responded to inquiries about an alleger at Diablo Canyon. Both also responded to calls concerning a planned spent fuel shipment from the Limerick plant to GE Vallecitos in California.

Region IV coordinated coverage by a Kansas City TV reporter of the exit meeting of a Y2K audit at Wolf Creek. Region IV is also working with an Omaha World Herald reporter for a story on the Cooper plant.

Duane Schmidt, NMSS, responded to an ABC-TV reporter in Washington, D.C. about the effects of depleted uranium on the body for a story on uranium projectiles used in the Gulf War.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
98-208	NRC Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards to Meet in Rockville, Maryland
98-209	NRC Reopens Public Comment Period on Proposed Changes to Medical Policy Statement, Regulations, Guidance
98-210	Note to Editors: ACRS meeting December 2
Regions:	
I-98-123	Note to Editors: Beaver Valley meeting November 16
I-98-124	Note to Editors: Millstone meetings November 24
IV-98-41	NRC, Entergy to Discuss Apparent Violations at River Bend Nuclear Plant
IV-98-42	NRC Issues Inspection Report on Spent Fuel Loading at Arkansas Nuclear One

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Office of International Programs
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NRC-DOE Meeting to Discuss Cooperation With China

A representative from OIP attended a meeting at Department of Energy (DOE) to discuss and coordinate NRC and DOE cooperation with China. DOE signed an Agreement with the China State Development Planning Commission (SDPC) on Cooperation Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technologies, on June 29, 1998, its first cooperative program with China (NRC's Protocol was initially signed in 1981). At the meeting, Kevin Burke made a presentation on NRC's bilateral program with the Chinese regulatory authorities (National Nuclear Safety Administration and the Ministry of Health) and its experiences implementing activities. Several DOE Departments then submitted proposals for activities under their Agreement. These proposals will be initially discussed at a meeting to be held in Beijing in December between DOE and the SDPC in preparation for their first Joint Coordinating Committee Meeting, tentatively scheduled in March 1999. Initially, DOE intends to implement their program with China at an agency-to-agency level, coordinating with NRC to insure that there is no duplication with any of our programs. At the Tuesday meeting, there was also a discussion of the treatment of business confidential information.

G-7 Nuclear Safety Working Group and Chornobyl Closure

During the week of November 16th, OIP representatives attended meetings sponsored by the National Security Council (NSC) and the National Economic Council (NEC) related to the possible financing by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) for completion of the Khmelnytsky Unit 2 and Rivne Unit 4 nuclear power reactors (VVER-1000s) in Ukraine. An overview of the current status of the EBRD's review of the Ukrainian loan request was provided, including discussion of proposed safety enhancements.

Discussions were also held describing the current status of efforts to implement the Memorandum of Understanding between the G-7 and the Government of Ukraine covering the closure of Chornobyl by the year 2000, including recent developments and near-term activities. These discussions were in preparation for the Nuclear Safety Account, G-7 Nuclear Safety Working Group and Chornobyl Sarcophagus Improvement Project meetings that will be held December 8 to 10 in London.

IAEA Vacancy Notices

The following notices from the International Atomic Energy Agency have been posted on NRC bulletin boards:

P-3	Legal Officer; Administration	98/069
P-4	Safeguards Analyst; Safeguards	98/070
P-5	Section Head; Research and Isotopes	98/071
P-5	Section Head; Safeguards	98/072
P-3	Plant Biotechnologist; Research and Isotopes	98/073
P-4	Nuclear Engineer; Nuclear Energy	98/074
P-4	Regional Project Manager (2 Posts); Technical Co-operation	98/803

Office of the Secretary
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending November 20, 1998

Documents Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. SECY-98-263	11/9/98	Proposed Rule: Revision of 10 CFR Part 35, Medical Use of Byproduct Material
SRM on 98-263	11/13/98	(same)
Commission Voting Record on 98-263	11/13/98	(same)

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Congress dated November 10, 1998 concerns the proposed changes in NRC's 10 CFR Part 35 regulations on medical use of byproduct material (incoming letter dated September 18, 1998 also released).
2. Letter to Representative Stephen Horn dated November 10, 1998 provides the NRC's November 1998 quarterly report on the Year 2000 problem.
3. Letter to Joe Colvin, NEI, dated November 10, 1998 concerns industry-proposed regulatory changes pending before the NRC (incoming letter dated August 28, 1998 also released).
4. Letter to Dr. Robert Seale, Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, dated November 10, 1998, concerns the impact of probabilistic risk assessment results and insights on the regulatory system (incoming letter dated September 30, 1998 also released).
5. Letter to Douglas Iscovitz, Principal, Indian Ridge Middle School (FL), dated November 12, 1998 provides a message of encouragement and advice to students.
6. Letter to Representative Constance Morella dated November 12, 1998 concerns the proposed changes to 10 CFR Part 35 regulations on medical use of byproduct material.
7. Letter to Senators Robert Bennett and Christopher Dodd and

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Representative Dennis Kucinich dated November 12, 1998 provides the NRC's Year 200 status report as of November 15, 1998.

8. Letter to Senator Daniel Inouye dated November 13, 1998 concerns the NRC's participation in meetings regarding a proposed commercial irradiator facility on the Island of Hawaii.
9. Letter to Dr. Dan Cutoiu, Romanian National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control, dated November 13, 1998 concerns safety assessments on the physical protection system of the Cernavoda Nuclear Power Plant.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Michael A. Philippon; Docket No. 55-32443-SP; Notice of Hearing and of Opportunity to Petition for Leave to Intervene or to Participate as an Interested Governmental Entity.
2. 10 CFR Parts 20, 32 and 35; Medical Use of Byproduct Material; Proposed Revision, Reopening of Public Comment Period.
3. 10 CFR Chapter 1; Medical Use of Product Material; Draft Policy Statement, Reopening of Public Comment Period.

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Beaver Valley 1 and 2

On November 16, a public meeting was held to present the findings of the Operational Safety Team Inspection (OSTI) and for the licensee to present its assessment of the restart process for Units 1 and 2. The OSTI team concluded that operations and maintenance were conducted safely and no significant issues were identified. The licensee determined the restarts were conducted well, with additional attention to be directed in the following areas: procedure revision, maintenance, and corrective action program backlogs; work control 12-week scheduling process; human performance; and license amendments to address existing bases for continued operation. NRC inspections will continue to focus on licensee actions in these areas. After this meeting, NRC management ended the Beaver Valley Oversight Panel (BVOP) activities.

Indian Point Unit 3

Indian Point 3 commenced a plant shutdown just before midnight on November 18, 1998, after determining that several containment isolation valves may not have been properly tested by TS requirements. Specifically, IP-3 TSs require determination of the leakage rate for type C valves sealed by Isolation Valve Seal Water (IVSW), a system unique to Indian Point used to reduce containment leakage following an accident by pressurizing the space between isolation valves (or isolation valve disks) to a pressure higher than the peak LOCA containment pressure. However, NYPA determined during a root cause evaluation of a recent valve failure that the procedure used to implement this TS did not explicitly require that the piping upstream or downstream of the valves in question be depressurized to ensure that the required IVSW pressure across the valve disk was achieved. NYPA expects to go to cold shutdown to complete an extent of condition review and retesting of the valves in question as well as conduct routine forced outage work activities.

Change in Ownership/Control of Allegheny University Health System to Tenet Health System Philadelphia, Inc. and Philadelphia Health and Education Corp.(PHEC)

Region I completed licensing actions associated with Tenet's acquisition of the Allegheny facilities that had declared bankruptcy earlier this year. This change involved amending 11

licenses, terminating one and converting it to a new license, after ensuring that all issues, including financial assurance, were properly addressed.

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Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Carolina Power and Light Company

On November 19, 1998, representatives from Carolina Power and Light were in the Regional Office to discuss issues related to configuration management, changes in the engineering design control organization, and the effectiveness of corporate support organizations at the three CPL nuclear power plants.

Nuclear Fuel Services Company

On November 16, 1998, representatives from Nuclear Fuel Services Company met with Region II and NMSS personnel to present their assessment of the plant's safety performance over the past year. Issues discussed included procedural content and adherence, problem tracking and trending, and schedular information for equipment installation and testing.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Resident Inspector Counterpart Meeting

The semi-annual Region IV Resident Inspector Counterpart meeting was held on November 17 - 19, 1998 in the Region IV offices. The keynote speaker was Dr. William Travers, Executive Director for Operations. He was joined by Samuel J. Collins, Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. The meeting included a presentation, open to public observation, by Dr. Steve Rosen, Manager, Risk Management and Industrial Relations, South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Company, related to Licensee Perspectives on the use of Probabilistic Risk Assessment. In addition, the Deputy Director, Office of Enforcement, made a presentation concerning development in NRC's enforcement program.

Lions' Club

On November 20, 1998, the Regional Administrator addressed the Colleyville, Texas, Lions' Club regarding the NRC and its mission.

Office of Executive Director for Operations
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 20, 1998

Proposed Rule Signed by Acting EDO

On November 19, 1998, the Acting Executive Director for Operations signed the proposed rule that would amend Part 31, "Requirements for Those Who Possess Certain Industrial Devices Containing Byproduct Material to Provide Requested Information," which was approved by the Commission by SRM dated October 23, 1998.

This is to notify the Commission that, in accordance with the rulemaking authority delegated to the EDO and the Commission's direction, the EDO has signed this proposed rule for publication in the Federal Register.