

May 21, 1998

SECY 98-111

For: The Commissioners

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

Subject: /s/  
WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING MAY 15,  
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 May 15, 1998

Issuance of Generic Letter 98-01, "Year 2000 Readiness of  
Computer Systems at Nuclear Power Plants"

On May 11, 1998, the staff published Generic Letter (GL) 98-01, "Year 2000 Readiness of Computer Systems at Nuclear Power Plants" in the Federal Register for action by nuclear power plant licensees. GL 98-01 is also available on the NRC Internet website. GL 98-01 requires nuclear power plant licensees to provide the following information regarding their programs for addressing the year 2000 (Y2K) problem:

1. Within 90 days of the date of GL 98-01, provide written confirmation that the licensee is pursuing a Y2K program such as that outlined in NEI/NUSMG 97-07, "Nuclear Utility Year 2000 Readiness" augmented appropriately in areas of risk management, contingency planning, and remediation of embedded systems, or if the licensee's program is significantly different, provide a description.
2. By July 1, 1999, provide written confirmation that the plant is or will be Y2K ready with regard to compliance with the terms and conditions of its license and NRC regulations. If the program is incomplete as of that date, the response must contain a status report on work remaining to achieve Y2K readiness.

The staff is currently developing a temporary instruction for conducting sample inspections of licensee Y2K programs. These inspections will begin later this year.

Meeting w/ Reliability Assessment Subcommittee (RAS) of the North  
American Electric Reliability Council (NERC) on Grid Reliability

On May 11, 1998, the Electrical Engineering Branch met with the Reliability Assessment Subcommittee (RAS) representative of the North American Reliability Council (NERC) and representatives from the Department of Energy (DOE) at DOE's Headquarters to discuss the status of the RAS Summer Assessment as it relates to the grid reliability issue and what impact summer conditions may have on the offsite power reliability to nuclear power plants.

The RAS representative described the steps taken to study projected electric grid conditions this year using probabilistic

and deterministic engineering techniques. As stated in the NERC Reliability Assessment 1997 - 2000 report, NERC expects the Summer of 1998 to be the most challenging season to reliable grid operation in years.

The near term problems are being caused by plant outages in Canada, Michigan, Illinois and New England which could result in load curtailments and other operational difficulties. None of the meeting attendees expect that the offsite power to nuclear power plants will be impacted by the currently anticipated operational difficulties.

The following additional points were noted during the subject meeting:

- Potential for resource shortfalls in the Midwest and New England regions. NERC has concerns regarding the deliverability of power should several regions run short of capacity within the same time frame. The potential states which may be affected include Illinois, Michigan and New England States. In order to address these concerns a joint study of simultaneous power transfers across regions will be completed soon by two regional reliability councils.
- Utilities are taking the following steps to prepare for potential problems this summer:
  - (1) conduct analytical studies on local and interregional bases in order to identify vulnerabilities;
  - (2) establish new operating procedures;
  - (3) reinforce the system and review equipment ratings;
  - (4) conduct operator preparation drills, and
  - (5) review load shedding procedures.

The RAS representative stated that the 1998 Summer Assessment Report should be completed and available on the Internet at [www.nerc.com](http://www.nerc.com) by close of business Friday, May 15, 1998.

#### Salem Nuclear Generating Station Units 1 and 2

Operational Status - Salem Unit 1 is operating at 100% power. Power was reduced to 90% in preparation for a 40% load drop test on May 13, 1998. After returning to 60% power, maintenance was conducted on the heater drain system and an operational test of the No. 11 heater drain pump was performed upon work completion. Power was returned to 90% on May 14, 1998, and a steam generator feed pump trip test was subsequently performed. Following this test, power will be maintained at 60% in order to do an operational test of the No. 12 heater drain pump.

Emergent Issue - Increased vibration levels have been noted on the No. 12 steam generator feed pump. The vibration appears to be due to intermittent locking-up of the mechanical coupling between the pump and the turbine. The licensee is evaluating pump realignment after completion of the testing described above and prior to returning to full power.

Salem Unit 2 continues to operate at 100% power.

Salem Assessment Panel (SAP) - The licensee is required to provide the results of its self-assessment of unit performance within 30 days after returning to full-power operation.

ACRS Briefing - The ACRS has requested a briefing from the licensee on September 2, 1998, regarding the lessons-learned from the extended dual-unit shutdown.

#### Catawba Nuclear Station Unit 1

On May 7, 1998, the Unit 1 auxiliary feedwater (AFW) system was declared inoperable following discovery that the upper surge tanks, which are the normal suction source for the AFW system, were at a temperature of 230°F, whereas the system's maximum design temperature is 138°F. This resulted from an incorrect controller setpoint on a condensate booster pump recirculation valve (14,400 gpm vs. 5,500 gpm) that diverted high temperature condensate to the surge tanks during an earlier unit downpower from 100 percent to 30 percent to address an unrelated problem. The surge tank temperature was returned to less than 138°F within 2 hours of discovery and, following an engineering evaluation by the licensee, the AFW system was declared operable early on May 8. An Augmented Inspection Team has been established to inspect and assess the event. The Catawba project manager is a member of the team. The licensee has also established a Significant Event Investigation Team to perform an independent investigation of the event.

#### Vogtle Unit 2

On May 8, 1998, the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Unit 2, tripped as a result of a lightning strike. Post-trip inspections indicated that a main transformer had been damaged.

#### Sierra Nuclear Corp. (SNC) Response

In a May 1, 1998, response, SNC provided information requested by the staff pertaining to the VSC-24 cask. Several potentially significant issues were identified. These issues will have to be

resolved prior to loading any VSC-24 casks. Three licensees may have fuel movement plans affected: Point Beach, Palisades, and ANO. NRC has made initial contact with the affected parties and is planning a face to face meeting within the next several weeks to discuss the issues and resolution plans.

#### Management Changes

Kenneth Weinbauer has been selected as the new Plant Manager for Kewaunee.

Mr. Weinbauer will replace Charles Schrock, who has been appointed Vice President-Energy Supply for Wisconsin Public Service (WPS). Mr. Weinbauer was formerly the Assistant Manager-Plant Operations and has held numerous positions with WPS since 1975.

Mr. Schrock has been with WPS since 1979, working in licensing, engineering, and operations at Kewaunee before being appointed Plant Manager in 1995. Both appointments are effective June 1, 1998. In addition, Mr. M. Marchi, currently Nuclear Business Group Manager, has been assigned to the newly created position of Site Vice President. The future assignment for the Nuclear Business Group Manager position has not been announced.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Paducah Tiger Transport Package

On May 6, 1998, the U.S. Enrichment Corporation (USEC) informed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) that they had found a discrepancy in the safety analysis documentation for the Paducah Tiger package (NRC Certificate of Compliance No. 6553). USEC identified a discrepancy in the analyses used to demonstrate that the package meets the performance standards in 10 CFR Part 71, under hypothetical accident conditions. The Paducah Tiger package is a foam-filled overpack, which USEC uses to ship large (10-ton) uranium hexafluoride ( $UF_6$ ) cylinders. USEC uses the package for shipment of  $UF_6$  by truck and rail from their plant in Paducah, Kentucky, to their plant in Portsmouth, Ohio. USEC has decided to suspend shipments using the Paducah Tiger package until the problem has been resolved. USEC estimates that additional analyses may take from two to four weeks to complete.

Meeting with Seaman Nuclear Corporation

On May 7, 1998, Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety (IMNS) staff met with the President of Seaman Nuclear Corporation and their consultant to discuss their application for registration of a portable moisture density gauge. The gauge contains up to 10 millicuries of cesium-137 and 40 millicuries of americium-241, and is designed for use by road construction personnel. Different than other portable moisture density gauges, both sources remain in the device during use.

Seaman Nuclear has a license to distribute these types of devices to specific licensees. However, their current application is to authorize use by general licensees. It appears that Seaman Nuclear can demonstrate that the device meets the safety criteria provided in 10 CFR 32.51 for distribution to general licensees. However, since the device is portable, there is a concern about accountability under the general license.

Seaman Nuclear has provided specifications for a program that would ensure the general licensees maintain accountability for their devices. The program would include having Seaman Nuclear contact the users on a periodic basis to verify that they can still account for their devices. IMNS staff is in the process of completing its review of the application and Seaman Nuclear's proposed accountability program.

Environmental Protection Agency Science Advisory Board's  
Radiation Advisory Committee Public Meeting

On May 7, 1998, Dr. Carl Paperiello, Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, and the Senior Level Advisor for Health Physics briefed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Science Advisory Board's Radiation Advisory Committee (RAC) on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) Concerns regarding Federal Guidance Report (FGR) 13, *Health Risks from Low-Level Environmental Exposure to Radionuclides*. In addition to the NRC presentation, Dr. Otto Raabe, President, *Health Physics Society*, also presented technical concerns regarding FGR 13. Dr. Paperiello summarized NRC's major comments as outlined in a February 4, 1998, letter from the Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory Programs, NRC, to the Acting Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation, EPA. The RAC advised NRC that they would take under consideration NRC's concerns regarding FGR 13 and would finalize their written recommendations to EPA by the end of the FGR 13 comment period of June 30, 1998.

Department of Energy Meeting on Mixed-Oxide

On May 12, 1998, the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards coordinated a meeting with representatives of the Department of Energy (DOE) and other Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff to discuss the pending DOE request for proposals (RFP) for the fabrication and irradiation of mixed-oxide fuel in commercial power reactors. This activity is part of the U.S. Government hybrid approach for disposition of nuclear material deemed excess to the weapons program. The RFP, which is expected to be issued within the next several days, indicates that the fuel fabrication facility will be NRC-licensed. A DOE proposed task that would enable NRC to respond to questions generated in connection with the RFP was also discussed.

Meeting with Department of Energy on the Geologic Disposition of  
Hanford N-Reactor Fuels

On April 29-30, 1998, Division of Waste Management staff met with Department of Energy (DOE) and contractor representatives to discuss plans for interim storage, packaging and ultimate disposition of Hanford N-Reactor spent fuels. Approximately 2,100 metric tons of heavy metal of low-enriched uranium metal, co-extruded into Zircaloy-2 cladding, representing the largest quantity of DOE-owned spent fuel, requires geologic disposal. During the early years of N-reactor operations, some of the cladding was damaged leaving the fuel exposed to pool water.



Approximately 25 percent of the fuel has undergone severe degradation while in wet storage.

During the meeting, DOE described the characteristics of the fuel; identified potential repository issues; presented information regarding the performance of the fuels under likely repository conditions; and described its approach for meeting regulatory requirements for criticality control, waste package design, and overall repository performance. DOE's current plans are to retrieve the fuel assemblies, pieces and fragments from the pools for subsequent cleaning and placement in approximately 400 multi-canister overpacks (MCO). The MCOs will be packaged in a 4-pack configuration (generating about 100 waste packages) for repository disposal. Any sludges remaining in the pools, or generated from the cleaning activities, will be processed in the planned Tank Waste Remediation System.

#### Inspection of Lakeview, Oregon, Uranium Mill Tailings Disposal Site

On May 5-6, 1998, staff from the Division of Waste Management (DWM) inspected the Uranium Mill Tailings Site near Lakeview, Oregon. Reclamation of the site was completed by the Department of Energy (DOE) in 1990, under Title I of the Uranium Mill Tailing Radiation Control Act and the site Long-term Surveillance Plan (LTSP) was accepted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in 1994. This was the first "inspection" of a Title I site performed by the NRC staff.

The inspection consisted of observation of the annual inspection performed by personnel from DOE's Grand Junction, Colorado, Office, and independent evaluation of site conditions by the staff. The DOE inspection and site conditions were generally in conformance with commitments in DOE's LTSP, and no violations were identified. The DWM and DOE staffs evaluated the condition of the side slope erosion protection rock, groundwater monitoring wells and seepage. DOE previously had identified potential problems related to the competency of the rock and seepage at the site. Following the inspection, DOE committed to continue rock testing to establish the need for corrective action concerning sideslope erosion protection, and to performing sampling and testing of the surface water and monitoring wells.

#### Staff Comments on Atlas Revised Draft Biological Opinion

By letter dated May 8, 1998, the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards transmitted staff comments on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) revised draft biological opinion

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ENCLOSURE B

(RDBO) on the proposed reclamation plan for Atlas Corporation's uranium mill tailings near Moab, Utah. Atlas, which holds Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) license SUA-917, submitted a plan to stabilize the tailings on site, near the Colorado River. Staff issued a Final Technical Evaluation Report, NUREG-1532, which found that the proposed plan met NRC requirements and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, NUREG-1531, which found the proposed plan environmentally acceptable. Staff is waiting for a biological opinion, from FWS, in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, before proceeding with a Final Environmental Impact Statement.

In July 1997, staff received a draft biological opinion (DBO) from FWS, which staff commented on by letter dated August 12, 1997. The RDBO was prepared by FWS to address the staff's significant concerns with the DBO. The staff found that, although the RDBO was a significant improvement over the DBO, the staff still had concerns. Concerns identified by the staff related to the reasonable and prudent alternatives proposed in the RDBO, as well as a number of important technical, regulatory, and administrative issues that needed to be resolved. The staff's May 1998 letter proposed a meeting and stated that the staff is prepared to work with FWS to fully resolve the complex technical and regulatory issues.

#### New Member of the Advisory Board of the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses

Dr. George F. Pinder has agreed to join the Advisory Board of the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA). An internationally recognized leader in hydrology, Dr. Pinder currently holds positions as Director of the Research Center for Groundwater Remediation Design, Professor of Civil Engineering, and Professor of Mathematics at the University of Vermont. His professional career has spanned more than three decades, and has included positions with the Nova Scotia Department of Mines, the U.S. Geological Survey, and Princeton University. He is former Dean of the College of Engineering and Mathematics at the University of Vermont, and former Chairman of the Department of Civil Engineering at Princeton. The recipient of numerous awards and honors, he is President of the International Society for Computational Methods in Engineering, and past President of the Hydrology Section of the American Geophysical Union.

The CNWRA Advisory Board (CAB) comprises senior individuals drawn from academia, industry, and government who advise the President of the CNWRA and the President of Southwest Research Institute (SwRI). The current Chairman of the CAB is Dr. Dale Stein, past

President of Michigan Technological University. The other members are Major General Andy Rollins, retired U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Frank Cotter, former head of Westinghouse's Washington office; and John Latz, President emeritus of the CNWRA and veteran of industry and the Department of Interior; Dr. Peter Flawn, former President of the University of Texas, and Dr. Guy McBride, former President of the Colorado School of Mines, have recently retired from the CAB.

Uranium Recovery Licensee Meeting with Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory Programs

On May 12, 1998, the Deputy Executive Director for Regulatory Programs, the Directors of the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards and Division of Waste Management, and staff from the Uranium Recovery Branch, met with representatives of International Uranium (USA) Corporation (IUC). The purpose of this meeting was to discuss IUC's proposal to modify the staff's "Final Position and Guidance on the Use of Uranium Mill Feed Materials Other Than Natural Ores," which was published in the Federal Register on September 22, 1995. IUC officially submitted the proposed modifications to the Commission on May 6, 1998.

IUC's presentation focused on two aspects of the staff's "alternate feed" guidance: (1) the prohibition of uranium mill licensees to receive and process materials containing hazardous wastes regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and (2) the need for mill licensees to address financial considerations in support of any application to receive and process alternate feed materials. When the staff raised concerns about the potential for dual regulation with EPA at mill sites, IUC stated its willingness to have issues related to hazardous materials addressed at some later time. If this component was removed from IUC's proposal, the staff expressed some question about the need for the proposal given that IUC has received license amendments in the past allowing it to process alternate feed materials at the White Mesa uranium mill. The staff also noted that, while it agreed with many of IUC's points concerning the requirement to address financial considerations, a Presiding Officer's decision on an earlier hearing matter raised the need to consider an economics test in the processing of alternate feed materials.

Also in attendance at this meeting were representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), which manages the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP). Much of the material on FUSRAP sites can be considered as alternate feed

materials, and the USACE sees recycling this material as a cost-effective way of cleaning up FUSRAP sites.

#### High-Level Waste Quality Assurance Meeting

On May 6, 1998, the Division of Waste Management staff held a quality assurance (QA) meeting with the staff of the Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management, to address QA issues identified in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Onsite Representative's reports, and subsequently by the State of Nevada in a letter to NRC dated April 14, 1998. The meeting was held at NRC Headquarters in Rockville, Maryland, and in Las Vegas, Nevada, and was attended by representatives of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, Clark County, Nevada, Nye County, Nevada, the State of Nevada, and Las Vegas media.

Some of the issues discussed were: the length of time for DOE to close deficiencies; increased deficiencies in scientific notebooks; supplier deficiencies; the length of time to issue Corrective Action Requests; and the potential for use of "graded" QA approach efforts applied to structures, systems, and components. As a result of the meeting, DOE provided a tentative time frame in which it intended to correct and close these issues. NRC management also will schedule a meeting with DOE QA management every six months at a minimum, to monitor and discuss QA issues. A meeting summary providing detailed information on the meeting will be issued shortly.

#### Department of Energy Issues Stop Work Order at Yucca Mountain

On May 8, 1998, the Department of Energy issued a Stop Work Order to the Civilian Radioactive Waste Management System Management and Operating Contractor at the Yucca Mountain Exploratory Studies Facility. The Stop Work Order was issued to cease water usage within the Enhanced Characterization Repository Block and Exploratory Studies facility because the use of excess water may have an adverse impact on scientific investigation activities. The management of water usage and measurement/accountability has been determined to be inadequate to offer appropriate levels of protection to prevent potential adverse impact on scientific studies.

A "get well" plan will be established to address the immediate problems and properly document and control water usage. The Stop Work Order will not affect the overall schedule of the tunnel boring machine (TBM) operation because the TBM is shut down to perform maintenance and modifications.

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ENCLOSURE B

Environmental Protection Agency Certification of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

On May 13, 1998, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certified that the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) will meet the environmental protection standards for the disposal of transuranic waste. The Department of Energy (DOE) must wait 30 days after the certification decision before disposing of radioactive waste at WIPP; therefore, DOE hopes to open WIPP by mid-June. However, EPA must approve the waste characterization controls and quality assurance program for each waste generating site before that facility transports waste to WIPP. As part of the certification decision, EPA has approved the waste characterization controls and quality assurance program for some waste at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). DOE also must obtain a permit from the State of New Mexico before WIPP can accept mixed waste. Therefore, DOE is initially limited to shipping radioactive waste from LANL for disposal. To comply with conditions on the certification, DOE also is required to seal waste storage panels with a strong concrete barrier to reduce the potential for releases in the event of human intrusion and to submit, before closure, a revised schedule for testing and implementing passive institutional controls.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Cooperative Severe Accident Research Program (CSARP) Meeting

The Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research conducts its annual Cooperative Severe Accident Research Program (CSARP) technical review meeting every year in the Spring. This meeting serves as an international forum for exchange of technical information in the field of severe accident research, specifically, information on progress made by the international community involved in cooperative research activities. Over the years, the CSARP meeting has served an important role in creating an international consensus on prioritizing severe accident issues and on reaching an agreement on the closure of some of these issues.

Now in its sixteenth year, the CSARP meeting this Spring took place on May 4-7, 1998, at the Residence Inn by Marriott, Bethesda, Maryland. The meeting was attended by nearly 100 research scientists, technical managers, and regulators from 17 CSARP Partner countries and from national laboratories, universities, and the NRC. Progress in severe accident research was discussed in the areas of fuel-coolant interactions and debris coolability, in-vessel phenomena and lower head integrity, hydrogen behavior, source term research, direct containment heating issue resolution, and severe accident codes. On the second day of the meeting, Commissioner Nils Diaz welcomed the meeting participants and offered brief remarks on the need to find closure on outstanding severe accident issues, to demonstrate the value of severe accident research with regard to changing regulatory needs, and to chart the future course that is consistent with the changing regulatory climate. On the last day of the meeting, a Partners' forum was held in the morning in which delegates were offered the opportunity to express their views on future directions in severe accident research as well as organization of future CSARP meetings.

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Transportation of Radioactive Materials Course

The presentation of the Transportation of Radioactive Materials (H-308) course was conducted in Pittsburgh, PA in order to more efficiently meet the geographical needs of the attendees. The course provides an understanding of radioactive material transport and the role of transport regulatory agencies and regulations (Titles 10 and 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations). Topics covered included limited quantities of radioactive material, instruments and articles, normal and special forms of radioactive materials, low specific activity and surface contaminated objects for radioactive materials. Basic concepts of package activity limitation, radiation and contamination limits, hazardous materials communications requirements, transportation safeguards, NRC inspection procedures, accident case histories, and emergency response were also covered. In addition to transportation issues, a brief overview of 10 CFR Part 61 waste generator requirements and waste classification system was presented. Thirty students were in attendance; 10 from NRC and 20 from existing or near term Agreement States.

Human Performance Meeting With Dr. Klaus Kotthoff of the Gesellschaft für Anlagen-und-Reaktorsicherheit (GRS) of Germany

On May 1, 1998, a meeting on human performance was hosted by the Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data (AEOD) with Dr. Klaus Kotthoff of the Gesellschaft für Anlagen-und-Reaktorsicherheit (GRS) of Germany. Several NRC representatives from AEOD, the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, and the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation participated in the discussions of hybrid control rooms, ATHEANA, human reliability, organizational factors, and data on rule-based actions. Information concerning ongoing AEOD studies involving the use of the human performance event database and the Accident Sequence Precursor data was also provided. Dr. Kotthoff discussed selected topics from GRS studies involving the man-machine interface, human influence and accident management measures, and the development of methodologies for evaluation of severe accident management strategies.

National Rep Conference

On April 26-29th 1998, AEOD staff represented the incident response program at the National REP Conference in Hyannis MA. Staff briefed the audience of about 250 emergency planning professionals for utilities and states on incident response program initiatives, the lost source exercise results, the North Carolina FRERP response and the upcoming Salem 98 exercise.

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ENCLOSURE D



### Salem Exercise

On May 5-7, 1998, management and staff of AEOD and Region I participated in Salem 98, an intermediate phase Federal participation exercise involving PSE&G, the States of Delaware and New Jersey, 2 counties and 6 Federal Agencies. AEOD and Region I staff also playing a significant role in planning the exercise. It involved various response facilities including the 2 State Emergency Operations Centers, Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center (FRMAC) and Disaster Field Office (DFO), Emergency News Center (ENC) and Emergency Operations Facility (EOF). The exercise evaluated State decision-making, actions and Federal support for a major release from the Salem plant that sent a radioactive plume 30 mile north of the site following the Delaware River on the New Jersey side. The NRC acted as Lead Federal Agency for this exercise. New Jersey participation was evaluated by the Federal Emergency management Agency. Preliminary feedback is that the exercise was very successful and met all objectives with no negative finding from FEMA. This was the largest Federal exercise of its kind in the last 6 years.

### Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-I-98-015A, Facile Tech, A DEVICE (STATIC ELIMINATOR) CONTAINING 20.6 MILICURIES OF AMERICIUM 241 FOUND IN THE DEBRIS FROM A DEMOLITION SITE-UPDATE
2. PNO-II-98-025, Duke Power Co. (Catawba 1), AUGMENTED INSPECTION TEAM AT CATAWBA NUCLEAR STATION
3. PNO-II-98-026, Virginia Power Co. (Surry 1), NOTIFICATION OF UNUSUAL EVENT AND SHUTDOWN IN EXCESS OF 72 HOURS
4. PNO-IV-98-019A, Emcon Northwest, Inc., STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE (Washington Incident No. WA-98-016)

Office of Administration  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Access Authorization Fee Schedule for Licensee Personnel (Parts 11 and 25)

A final rule that amends the regulations to revise the fee schedule for background investigations of licensee personnel who require access to National Security Information and/or Restricted Data or control over Special Nuclear Material was published in the Federal Register on May 7, 1998 (63 FR 25156). This action conforms NRC charges to the rates charged by the Office of Personnel Management for conducting investigations. The final rule became effective May 7, 1998.

Revision of NRC Enforcement Policy

A complete revision of the NRC Enforcement Policy was published in the Federal Register on May 13, 1998 (63 FR 26630). The revised Enforcement Policy is based on a 2-year review of the Enforcement Policy and consolidates changes to the Enforcement Policy made since its previous publication on June 30, 1995. The revised Enforcement Policy became effective May 13, 1998.

U.S. Enrichment Corporation (USEC)

On May 13, 1998, DFS staff attended a meeting with NMSS and DOE personnel at the DOE Germantown facility, to discuss the current status of the FOCI reviews associated with the privatization of USEC.

Chief Information Officer  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests Received during  
the 5-Day Period of May 8, 1998 - May 14, 1998:

Indian Point 2, inspection report (OI 1-97-038) (EA 98-056).  
(FOIA/PA-98-192)

Indian Point 2, 5/6/98 Enforcement Conference meeting minutes.  
(FOIA/PA-98-193)

Borg-Warner Protective Services, OI report 1-96-045.  
(FOIA/PA-98-194)

U.S. Nuclear Corp., 801 North Lake St., Burbank, CA.  
(FOIA/PA-98-195)

Isotopes Specialties Co., or Nuclear Corp. of America, 170 West  
Providencia St. and 703 South Main St., Burbank, CA sites.  
(FOIA/PA-98-196)

San Onofre, So. California Edison, listing of all FOIAs submitted  
re. (FOIA/PA-98-197)

MLTS database, active licensees. (FOIA/PA 98-198)

Office of Human Resources  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Interagency Team Meeting Attended for the National Day of  
Volunteering for Federal Employees

On May 13, 1998, Henry Rubin attended the second Interagency Team Meeting for the National Day of Volunteering for Federal Employees at the Department of Transportation. The purpose of the meeting was to organize the first National Day of Volunteering for Federal Employees, which is scheduled for Saturday, June 13, 1998. The goal is to organize as many Federal employees as possible to perform volunteer work in their communities on that day. Further details will be provided as to what volunteer opportunities will be available.

|                   |                     |      |
|-------------------|---------------------|------|
| <b>Arrivals</b>   |                     |      |
| BHACHU, Ujagar    | Mechanical Engineer | NMSS |
| <b>Departures</b> |                     |      |
| LANDRON, Dawn     | Secretary           | OE   |

Office of Public Affairs  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending May 15, 1998

School Volunteers Program

Ramin Assa, NRR, gave a presentation on his engineering career at Springbrook H.S.

| <b>Press Releases</b> |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Headquarters:</b>  |   |
| 98-67                 | NRC Publishes Revision of Enforcement Policy  |
| 98-68                 | NRC Requires Information From Nuclear Power Plant Licensees About 'Year 2000' Readiness of Computer Systems |
| 98-69                 | NRC to Hold Public Meeting in Pennsylvania on Decommissioning of B&W Shallow Land Disposal Area             |
| 98-70                 | NRC Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards to Meet in Rockville, Maryland, June 3-5                       |
| 98-71                 | NRC Amends Regulations On Physical Protection For Storage Of Spent Fuel                                     |
| 98-72                 | NRC Seeks Public Input For Environmental Impact Statement On Proposed Spent Fuel Storage Facility In Utah   |
| 98-73                 | Note To Editors: ACRS Meeting Scheduled June 11-12  |
| 98-74                 | NRC Licensees Temporarily Authorized To Possess Molybdenum-99 In Quantities That Exceed License Limits      |
| <b>Regions:</b>       |   |
| I-98-54               | NRC To Discuss Apparent Packaging Violation With PA Company   |
| I-98-55               | Note To Editors: Millstone Commission Meeting Rescheduled   |
| I-98-56               | NRC Proposes Fine For PA Hospital For Nuclear Medicine Violation  |

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| I-98-57  | NRC, PECO To Discuss Apparent Violations At Peach Bottom Plant                                  |
| II-98-35 | NRC Officials Send Inspection Team to Catawba   |
| II-98-36 | NRC Staff Schedules Management Meetings at Oconee   |
| II-98-37 | NRC Inspection Team At Catawba To Brief Duke Energy Officials On Friday                         |
| II-98-38 | NRC Staff Proposes \$10,500 Civil Penalty Against Baxter Health Care Corporation Of Puerto Rico |

Office of International Programs  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

United Kingdom Visitors

On Friday, May 15, the British House of Lords Subcommittee on the Management of Nuclear Waste of the Select Committee on Science and Technology met with Commissioner Dicus, Commissioner McGaffigan, and NMSS staff for a roundtable discussion on the U.S. Radioactive Waste Program. Lord Craig of Radley (David Brownrigg Craig), Lord Flowers (Brian Hilton Flowers), Lord Howie of Troon (William Howie), and Lord Tombs (Francis Leonard Tombs) will also be visiting the WIPP and Yucca Mountain facilities next week. They will be accompanied by Mr. Don Rolt, Clerk of the Subcommittee; Christopher Whaley, British Embassy Counselor for Science, Technology, Energy, and the Environment; and Jonathan Temple, Science Officer.

May 15, 1998

ENCLOSURE N

Office of the Secretary  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending May 15, 1998

| Document   | Date    | Subject  |
|--|---------|--|
| <b>Decision Documents Released to the Public</b> |         |  |
| 1. COMSECY-98-010                                | 4/7/98  | Experts Needed for Plant Life Extension Cases  |
| SRM on 98-010                                    | 5/5/98  | (same)   |
| Chmn. Jackson vote on 98-010                     | 4/18/98 | (same)   |
| Comm. Dicus vote on 98-010                       | 4/25/98 | (same)   |
| Comm. Diaz vote on 98-010                        | 4/30/98 | (same)   |
| Comm. McGaffigan vote on 98-010                  | 4/22/98 | (same)   |
| 2. SECY-98-062                                   | 4/1/98  | Proposed Section 123 Agreement for Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation with Ukraine   |
| Comm. Voting Record on 98-062                    | 5/5/98  | (same)   |
| SRM on 98-062                                    | 5/5/98  | (same)   |
| 3. SECY-98-087                                   | 4/20/98 | Proposed Generic Letter 98-XX: Interim Guidance for Updated Final Safety Analysis Reports in Accordance with 10 CFR 50.71(e) |
| 4. SECY-98-030                                   | 2/25/98 | Implementation of DSI 22 Research  |
| Comm. Voting Record on 98-030                    | 5/8/98  | (same)   |
| SRM on 98-030                                    | 5/8/98  | (same)   |



|  |         |  |
|--|---------|--|
| 5. SECY-98-033                                   | 2/26/98 | Proposed Rule: Miscellaneous Changes to 10 CFR Part 72, Licensing Requirements for the Independent Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste        |
| Comm. Voting Record on 98-033                    | 5/8/98  | (same)   |
| SRM on 98-033                                    | 5/8/98  | (same)   |
| 6. SECY-98-046                                   | 3/9/98  | Final Rule: Amendments to 10 CFR Parts 30, 40, 50, 70, and 72--Self-Guarantee of Decommissioning Funding by Non-Profit and Non-Bond Issuing Licensees                    |
| Comm. Voting Record on 98-046                    | 5/13/98 | (same)   |
| 7. SECY-98-060                                   | 3/27/98 | Final Rule: Revision of 10 CFR 32.14(d) to Place Timepieces Containing Gaseous Tritium Light Sources on the Same Regulatory Basis as Timepieces Containing Tritium Paint |
| Comm. Voting Record on 98-060                    | 5/13/98 | (same)   |
| <b>Information Papers Released to the Public</b> |         |  |
| 1. SECY-98-096                                   | 5/1/98  | Quarterly Status Report on the Probabilistic Risk Assessment Implementation Plan   |
| 2. SECY-98-099                                   | 5/4/98  | Status Report of Staff Activities Related to Reviewing the Viability of Entombment as a Decommissioning Option for Power Reactors  |
| 3. SECY-98-103                                   | 5/8/98  | Weekly Information Report - Week Ending May 1, 1998  |

|                |        |  |
|----------------|--------|--|
| 4. SECY-98-104 | 5/7/98 | Staff Requirements - COMSECY-98-031 - (DSI-17) - Strategic Assessment Issue Paper: Management and Organization and COMSECY-96-026 (DSI-15) - Management Philosophy |
|----------------|--------|--|

**Memoranda Release to the Public**

|            |         |   |
|------------|---------|---|
| 1. M980513 | 5/13/98 | Staff Requirements -<br>Affirmation Session, May 13,<br>1998: I. SECY-98-046- Final<br>Rule: Amendments to 10 CFR<br>PTs 30, 40, 50, 70, & 72--<br>Self-Guarantee of<br>Decommissioning Funding by<br>Non-Profit and Non-Bond<br>Issuing Licensees; II. SECY-<br>98-060 - Final Rule: Revision<br>of 10 CFR 32.14(d) to Place<br>Timepieces Containing Tritium<br>Light Sources on the Same<br>Regulatory Basis as Timepieces<br>Containing Tritium Paint |
|------------|---------|---|

Commission Correspondence Released to the Public

1. Letter to Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal dated May 6, 1998 responds to concerns about the safety of Northeast Utilities' nuclear operations (Incoming of March 16, 1998 also released).
2. Letter to President of the Senate Albert Gore and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich dated May 4, 1998 provides the NRC Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences, Fiscal Year 1997.
3. Letter to Dr. Dana A. Powers offers a reappointment to a four-year term on the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. 10 CFR Parts 60, 72, 73, 74 and 75; Physical Protection for Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste; Final Rule.
2. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Notice of Meeting on June 3-5, 1998.
3. ACRS Subcommittee on Thermal-Hydraulic Phenomena; Notice of Meeting on June 11-12, 1998.

Region I  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Maine Yankee Citizens Advisory Panel (CAP), May 6, 1998

On May 6, 1998, Region I staff attended a meeting of the CAP at the Maine Yankee site. Maine Yankee presented highlights of its site characterization report that is essentially complete. This report will be made available to the public at the site and at the LPDR. CAP also requested a copy be available at the State library in Augusta, which the licensee agreed to provide. The licensee made a presentation on selection process for Decommissioning Operations Contractor (DOC). Four teams have made the short list. Bids are due May 29, with contract award scheduled for August.

A new State law was recently passed defining the State's role in Maine Yankee decommissioning as "oversight and verification". This means "reasonable" verification effort over the next 2 years, depending on how the decommissioning process proceeds. A new assistant for the State Nuclear Inspector was funded and the person has been hired.

Breitling USA Enforcement Conference

On May 7, 1998, a predecisional enforcement conference was held with Breitling USA, Inc. of Stamford, Connecticut. The purpose of the conference was to discuss the findings of an NRC inspection which was conducted on March 10, 1998 (Inspection Report No. 999-90001/98-002), which identified an apparent violation involving the licensee's failure to obtain the required NRC licenses before possessing, using, and distributing approximately 70,000 timepieces containing byproduct material (H-3). The licensee admitted the violation and described their corrective actions. A decision regarding enforcement is pending.

Region II  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Nuclear Fuel Services, Inc.

During the week of May 11, 1998, a special Region II led team inspection, consisting of Region II and NMSS personnel, was conducted to determine the licensee's readiness to begin down-blending high enriched uranyl nitrate to produce low enriched UO<sub>2</sub> for use in the commercial fuel cycle. This was the second readiness inspection for this process. Inspection findings indicate the licensee is not ready to begin the downblending process. Major activities requiring completion by the licensee include: (1) completion and testing of conversion furnace equipment installation, including the field verification of nuclear criticality safety analyses, (2) determine the root cause and correct inaccuracies and omissions of controls in operating procedures, (3) establishment of a system to insure control of jumpers so that systems remain as analyzed, and (4) demonstrate that down-blending equipment installation did not compromise the criticality alarm system.

Duke Energy Corporation - Catawba

On May 14, 1998, representatives from Duke Energy Corporation were in the Regional Office to attend a open Predecisional Enforcement Conference. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the apparent violations associated with the Unit 2 A-train auxiliary building ventilation surveillance test failures at Catawba. The conference will be held at 10:30 a.m. in the Main Conference Room.

The Augmented Inspection Team (AIT), which was onsite to follow up on a loss of Auxiliary Feed Water (AFW), exited on Friday, May 15. The AIT inspection centered on the loss of AFW which had resulted from the overheating on a water supply tank for the AFW system by a single failure of a non-safety system.

The exit meeting was attended by senior Duke management and the Director, Division of Reactor Safety from Region II. There was some media interest from a local TV channel.

Baxter Healthcare Corporation

On May 14, 1998, Region II issued two Severity Level III violations and proposed a \$10,500 civil penalty to Baxter Healthcare Corporation of Puerto Rico for wilfully making an

unauthorized alteration to a safety system and making  
unauthorized repairs to the irradiator.

May 15, 1998

ENCLOSURE P

Region III  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Management Meeting with Commonwealth Edison Company

On May 12, 1998, a management meeting was conducted in the Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, between management representatives from Commonwealth Edison Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on corporate engineering issues at all of the company's six stations.

Management Meeting with Commonwealth Edison Company - Quad Cities

On May 13, 1998, a management meeting was conducted in the Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, between management representatives from Commonwealth Edison Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on plans to start up Quad Cities Units 1 and 2. NRC Region III Regional Administrator participated in the meeting.

Prairie Island Nuclear Power Station SALP Public Meeting

On May 12, 1998, NRC Region III Regional Administrator and other members of the NRC staff met in Red Wing, Minnesota, with representatives of Northern States Power Company to review the recently issued Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) for the Prairie Island Nuclear Power Station. The Prairie Island facility received ratings of "superior" in maintenance and plant support and "good" in operations and engineering.

Region IV  
Items of Interest  
Week Ending May 15, 1998

Waterford 3 Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP)  
Public Meeting

The Regional Administrator and members of the Region IV and NRR staff held a public meeting with Entergy Operations, Inc. (Waterford) on May 12, 1998, to discuss the results of the SALP. The SALP report, which was issued on April 24, 1998, rated Waterford 3 a Category 2 in all four functional areas. This involved an improvement from the previous rating of Category 3 in Engineering. Following the public meeting, the Regional Administrator and his staff met with Local and State officials to discuss issues of common interest.

May 15, 1998

ENCLOSURE P



Office of Congressional Affairs  
 Items of Interest  
 Week Ending May 15, 1998

| CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, <u>NO. 16</u> |                    |       |  |  |  |
|---|--------------------|-------|--|--|--|
| OCA Contact                                   | DATE & PLACE       | TIME  | WITNESS  | SUBJECT  | COMMITTEE  |
| Madden  | 05/19<br>124 DSOB  | 10:00 | NEI, Genl<br>Atomics, Los<br>Alamos, PECO<br>Energy, Argonne | Advanced Nuclear<br>Technologies                 | Senators Domenici/Reid<br>Energy & Water Development<br>Appropriations                               |
| Callahan                                      | 05/20<br>2322 RHOB | 10:30 | NRC, DOE   | External Regulation of<br>DOE<br>Facilities      | Reps. Schaefer/Hall<br>Energy and Power<br>Commerce  |
| Callahan                                      | 05/21<br>2318 RHOB | 10:00 | NRC, DOE,<br>OSHA, GAO                                       | External Regulation of<br>DOE Defense Facilities | Reps. Calvert/Roemer<br>Energy & Environment<br>Reps. Pickering/Johnson<br>Basic Research<br>Science |