

April 3, 1998

SECY 98-064

For: The Commissioners

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

Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING MARCH 27, 1998

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*No input this week.

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Baffle Former Bolts in Westinghouse Reactors

During the week of March 16, 1998, some members of Division of Engineering (DE) and other NRR divisions met to discuss the staff activities associated with the Westinghouse Owners' Group baffle former bolt review. Also, on March 20, 1998, members from DE and NRR participated in a telephone conference with several members of the Westinghouse Owners' Group. The purpose of the call was to discuss the Owners Group request for NRC review and approval of proposed methodologies for addressing the potential for finding baffle bolt cracking in Westinghouse designed reactors. Baffle bolt cracking was reported in European plants from 1988 to the present in reactors that use similar bolt material. To date, baffle bolt failures have not been identified in US facilities; however, the Owners Group is proactively addressing the issue.

The Owners Group is developing methodologies to address the issue, including plans to inspect and replace baffle bolts on lead plants. The Owners' Group proposes that the inspection and replacement activities will occur on the initial lead plant (Point Beach) starting in September of 1998. NRC review and approval of the methodologies was requested by August 1998. During the initial meeting on the issue in August 1997, the request was identified as approval of the inspection scope, inspection method and acceptance criteria and bases. At that time, the staff indicated potential difficulties in meeting the schedule due to the complexity of the issue and the forecasted submittal dates. Methodologies for thermal hydraulic load modeling, accident analysis, bolt inspections and replacements, etc., are being developed in a series of WCAP topical reports. To date, six of the reports have been identified, and three have been submitted for review, including two within the last month. The staff has not yet received a plant specific request for application of the baffle bolt methodology topical reports. The review and evaluation of the methodologies will require the efforts of EMEB, EMCB and SRXB.

During the telephone conference, the Chairman of the Owners Group Baffle Bolting Working Group, was advised, that the staff cannot support the proposed schedule for the initial plant inspection and replacement activities. The staff cited the complexity of the review, the lack of knowledge of the issues that may need to be addressed in the reports and documents not yet received, and limits on available resources. The WOG

acknowledged the staff's early response regarding its inability to support the fall outage at Point Beach. The Owners Group had planned to meet next week, and intends to use the meeting to consider other alternatives. The alternatives will be discussed during the WOG/NRC senior management meeting on March 31 and at the next baffle bolt meeting with the staff, tentatively planned for the second week of April.

Update on CRDM Motor Housing Weld Issue

The staff has contacted both the CEOG and B&WOG regarding the issue of CRDM motor housing welds. Both CE and Framatome (B&W) utilize a ferritic section, either 508 Class 2 or 403 buttered with 309 SS or Alloy 600, in their respective CRDM housings. This design is present in all CRDMs for both CE and Framatome. Ten percent of the respective peripheral CRDM motor housing welds have been included for surface or volumetric examination as a part of the PSI/ISI programs. The OGs are reviewing the fabrication, manufacturing NDE, PSI and ISI results as well as doing some inspection of CRDM motor housings. Both OGs will provide a submittal on April 13, 1998, discussing the results of their efforts and providing a response on behalf of their owners. The staff intends to review these submittals and provide its assessment to management. The item is expected to be discussed as either a part of the Framatome April 23, 1998, meeting on barrel bolting or as a separate meeting scheduled on the same day. The CEOG will include this issue as a part of the meeting scheduled with NRC management on May 21, 1998.

BWR ECCS Strainer Clogging Issue/Utility Resolution Guidance

The Utility Resolution Guidance (URG) document was prepared by the BWROG in response to NRC Bulletin 96-03 to provide utilities with guidance on sizing of BWR ECCS suction strainers. The staff reviewed the URG and issued a draft SER on December 31, 1997. The draft SER was issued to the BWROG to provide them with an opportunity to respond to several open issues. The staff is currently evaluating the BWROG's response to the draft SER. One of the open issues identified in the draft SER deals with calculation of headloss when the debris bed on the strainer consists of a combination of fibrous debris and reflective metallic insulation (RMI). The BWROG indicates (in the URG) that the headloss for a combined RMI/Fibrous debris bed is bounded by the headloss of the fibrous debris bed alone. In its draft SER, the staff challenged the basis for the BWROG conclusion, and the BWROG has provided their response to the open item standing by

their original conclusion. However, since receiving the BWROG's response to the open item, the staff has become aware of testing conducted by LaSalle at the EPRI test facility in Charlotte in support of their strainer installation. Preliminary insights from the testing indicate that for certain debris size distributions, the headloss for the combined fiber/RMI debris bed could greatly exceed that of a fiber only bed. Specifically, LaSalle biased the size distribution towards small RMI debris in order to be more conservative in their design. The BWROG conducted their tests using a size distribution more consistent with the results of debris generation tests conducted at Karlsham and Colorado Engineering Experimental Station, Inc. (CEESI). Because the LaSalle results are inconsistent with the BWROG conclusions on combined RMI/fibrous debris beds, the staff will evaluate the results from the LaSalle tests prior to finalizing the SER on the URG. LaSalle is currently drafting their test report and will try to transmit it to the staff in about two weeks.

DPV Concerning the Westinghouse AP600 Fire Pump Installation Within the Turbine Building

An NRR DPV Review Panel reviewed a Differing Professional View (DPV) submitted regarding the AP600 fire pump installation within the turbine building and whether Westinghouse adequately demonstrated that the fire pumps are protected from explosions, fire and structural damage resulting from a turbine building fire. Specifically, the DPV stated that the fire pumps should be located in an area that will not be susceptible to fire damage as required by NFPA 20, "Centrifugal Fire Pumps," as implemented in current operating plant designs.

Although the staff's review found the AP600 fire protection design acceptable, the NRR DPV Review Panel concluded that the design does not appear to meet the intent of the policy stated in SECY 93-087, that passive plant designs will be reviewed using the best available technology and the newest industry codes and standards. As a result, the NRR DPV Review Panel recommended that the staff should take appropriate action to inform Westinghouse that the current AP600 design of the fire pump layout should be reassessed keeping in mind demonstrating how this layout provides an equivalent level of facility fire safety compared to the layout of the pumps at operating plants and evolutionary plant designs, as well as how this design follows the latest fire protection standards. The panel also recommended that the staff consider fire protection design enhancements of the applicant and review the staff's fire protection review guidance for clarity. The appropriate organizations in NRR have

been tasked with completing the panel's recommended action items within scheduled due dates.

Salem Nuclear Generating Station Units 1 and 2

Operational Status - On March 24, 1998, a voltage spike on the no. 22 miscellaneous AC panel caused the digital feedwater control system to slowly runback the No. 21 steam generator feed pump. The operators took action to reduce turbine load to keep the unit online. No other control circuits powered by this panel reacted to the spike. Since panel maintenance was in progress at the time of the spike, the licensee attempted to recreate the problem by repeating the activities. However, no voltage anomalies were seen. Therefore, the licensee is returning the unit to full power. The station remains in an abnormal operating procedure for high river grass loading level that requires increased monitoring of heat exchanger differential pressures.

Salem Unit 1 remains in Mode 3 with control rod testing in progress. This testing is on the critical path for plant startup. Westinghouse has evaluated the noise in the reactor vessel head area to be process noise, and no further action is needed. The current schedule still projects initial criticality/Mode 2 between April 2 and 5, 1998. On March 23, 1998, the licensee informed the staff that upon completion of required testing and full-crew simulator and classroom startup training, it is ready to restart Salem Unit 1.

Salem Assessment Panel (SAP) - The panel will be reviewing the licensee's request for authorization to restart the unit. Pending successful completion of testing, the panel will make its restart recommendation to the Regional Administrator and the confirmatory action letter will be modified to acknowledge its closeout. The licensee will be required to provide the results of its self-assessment of unit performance within 30 days after returning to full-power operation. The next SAP meeting will be scheduled after the licensee completes the first hold-point at 25 percent power for flux mapping.

Licensing Actions - Currently, there are no licensing amendments that are needed before the scheduled restart of Unit 1.

Management Changes

Mr. Joel Dimmette, General Manager Plant Operations, has announced his resignation from Entergy Operations, Inc. effective March 28, 1998, to become the Site Vice President for the Quad Cities Station. Mr. Thomas O. Hildebrandt, the current

Manager for Plant Maintenance, will assume the River Bend Station Plant Manager position until a permanent replacement is named. Mr. Dimmette has been the plant manager at River Bend since September 1993.

ComEd announced Mr. David B. Cook, Quad Cities Station Manager, has decided to leave ComEd to pursue other interests. Mr. Lamar W. (Bill) Pearce, General Station Manager, has been appointed the new Quad Cities Station Manager. Bill Pearce will have all direct reports that had reported to the General Station Manager and the Station Manager report to him. This change was effective on March 23, 1998.

On March 20, 1998, Richard R. Grigg, President and Chief Operating Officer of Wisconsin Electric Power Company, announced the appointment of Michael B. Sellman as Chief Nuclear Officer, effective March 26, 1998. Mr. Sellman joined Wisconsin Electric on March 2, 1998, as Senior Vice President.

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE A

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Inspection of the VSC-24 Ultrasonic Examination Procedure at
Arkansas Nuclear One

On March 16-20, 1998, the Spent Fuel Project Office led a team inspection at Arkansas Nuclear One (ANO) related to VSC-24 cask welding issues. The objective was to inspect a demonstration of the ultrasonic examination (UT) process proposed by the VSC-24 Owners Group (VSCOG) to verify cask closure weld integrity. The VSCOG has revised welding methods to correct problems identified with earlier VSC-24 closure welds. The VSCOG includes the VSC-24 vendor, Sierra Nuclear Corporation, and licensees using the VSC-24 system - Consumers Power (Palisades), Entergy/Arkansas Power & Light (ANO), and Wisconsin Electric Power Company (Point Beach).

Due to degradation and eventual failure of two UT transducers, the inspection could not be completed. The VSCOG plans to demonstrate a different UT technique during the week of April 20, 1998, at the Palisades site (this demonstration was already planned before the transducer failures at ANO). The inspection will continue at that time.

International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards for Disposal of
Spent Fuel

On March 16-17, 1998, a meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee of the International Atomic Energy Agency's Programme for Development of Safeguards for the Final Disposal of Spent Fuel in Geologic Repositories was held in Paris, France. The committee is chaired by a staff member from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards. The Paris meeting was the last of the scheduled meetings of the committee. Comments on most of the final technical reports and summary reports have been resolved. The final reports are expected to be issued during the summer.

Discussions on the Additional Protocol to the U.S.-International
Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards Agreement

On March 23, 1998, initial consultations between the U.S. and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the contents of the U.S. Additional Protocol to the Voluntary Offer Agreement were held. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission was represented on the U.S. delegation by a staff member from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards. The implementation of the Additional

Protocols by the IAEA Member States is a key component of the program to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of IAEA safeguards.

Safeguards Implementation Coordination Meeting

During the week of March 16, 1998, the Subgroup on IAEA Safeguards in the U.S. (SISUS) met with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Operations OB.1, in Vienna, Austria, to discuss issues related to the implementation of IAEA safeguards in the U.S. Issues discussed included: (1) finalization of a Facility Attachment for the Y-12 Tube Vault; (2) plans for stabilization of the plutonium inventories currently under IAEA safeguards at Hanford and Rocky Flats and how safeguards would be maintained; (3) status of the IAEA verification experiment on downblending of high enriched uranium hexafluoride at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant; (4) maintenance of IAEA safeguards on spent fuel returned to the U.S. from certain foreign States; (5) application of IAEA safeguards to additional materials declared excess to the U.S. weapons program; and (6) reporting problems on information delivered to the IAEA.

Publication of New Data Bearing on the Likelihood of Faulting and Volcanism at Yucca Mountain

In a paper published in "Science," on March 27, 1998, a contractor to the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses (CNWRA) documents observations of horizontal crustal movement made over a six year period by Global Positioning System surveys. The 1/4-inch extension in six years (~1 mm/yr) is about 3-4 times faster than the average velocity elsewhere in the Basin and Range province. The researchers, from CalTech and Harvard Astrophysical Observatory, hypothesize that the region is undergoing a period of anomalously high strain which may last another few tens of thousands of years. The researchers suggest that the results of conventional geological methods of determining the seismotectonic hazards have under-estimated the earthquake and volcanic hazards that may affect Yucca Mountain. The data and analyses of uncertainties associated with the method appear to be valid. The hypothesis is only one of several which must be evaluated. The significance of the results is being evaluated by methods of system performance analysis under development jointly by the Division of Waste Management and CNWRA staffs.

Department of Energy/Nuclear Regulatory Commission Technical Exchange on Total-System Performance Assessments in Preparation for the Department of Energy Viability Assessment

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE B

On March 17-19, 1998, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and Department of Energy (DOE) staff conducted a technical exchange to discuss and comment on the respective staff approaches to total-system performance assessments (TSPAs) for the proposed high-level waste repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. A secondary goal of the technical exchange was for the NRC staff to provide DOE with early feed-back regarding potential vulnerabilities in the TSPA to be submitted as part of the forthcoming DOE Viability Assessment (VA). This technical exchange was the third in a series of interactions intended to facilitate NRC staff review of the DOE TSPA-VA. The focus of the discussions were the technical bases, approaches and results of the DOE TSPA-VA Base Case, and recent NRC sensitivity studies. Detailed discussions were held on the following topics: water contacting waste packages, waste package lifetime, rate of release of radionuclides, and radionuclide concentrations during transport. At the conclusion of the technical exchange, NRC staff identified both positive developments and areas where it had further questions pertaining to the DOE analyses. The areas where questions remain will receive further staff review and are likely topics for future discussions with DOE.

In addition to staff from NRC, DOE and their respective contractors, representatives from the State of Nevada; Clark County, Nevada; Nye County, Nevada; the Nuclear Energy Institute; the Electric Power Research Institute; the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board, and NRC's Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste also attended the technical exchange.

Regional Meeting Regarding Ohio's Request for Agreement State Status

On March 24, 1998, staff from the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety (IMNS) joined staff from Region III (RIII) and Region I (RI) to coordinate and discuss the review of the draft application from the State of Ohio for agreement state status. RI offered useful guidance based on its recent experience with the Massachusetts application. IMNS and RIII discussed the timing and depth of the review and the division of responsibility for various parts of the review. The Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) has lead responsibility for issues involving sealed sources and devices, general licenses, exempt distribution licenses, decommissioning, and waste management. NMSS and the Regions share responsibility for contaminated sites. The meeting was helpful in obtaining RI experience associated with timing, coordination, and workloads for transfer of materials regulatory responsibilities and docket files to new Agreement States.

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE B

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Enlarged Program Group Meeting at the Halden Reactor Project

The NRC has been a sponsor of the Halden Reactor Project (HRP) since 1958. Twenty countries are now signatories or associate members to the international agreement. In FY 1998 the NRC's contribution to the project is \$1.2M. Approximately every 18 months the HRP sponsors an Enlarged Program Group meeting at which the HRP's numerous efforts in the areas of human factors, digital I&C, and fuels and materials are presented to representatives of the sponsoring countries. In addition, the representatives from the sponsoring countries can present related work. On March 15-20, 1998, the group was convened in Lillehammer, Norway, with over 250 technical specialists from all 20 sponsoring countries participating in the group meetings. NRC's Deputy Executive Director Ashok Thadani gave the keynote address to open the conference. The results of research at the HRP have been used as the technical basis for guidance documents developed in RES to support reviews of licensee submittals in the areas of human factors (e.g., NUREG-0700, alarm systems), digital I&C (e.g., formal methods for assessing software) and fuels (e.g., additional data for further burnup extensions of NRC's FRAPCON-3 fuel rod behavior code).

Meeting on Electrosleeving of Steam Generator Tubing

RES staff members from the Division of Engineering Technology organized a public technical meeting, held at Argonne National Laboratories (ANL), with Framatome Technologies Incorporated (FTI), the electrosleeve vendor, on March 17, 1998. Electrosleeving is a promising technology for steam generator (SG) tube repair that involves deposition of nano-crystalline nickel on the inner diameter of SG tubes to restore structural integrity to degraded regions. NRR is currently in the process of reviewing a licensee submittal for the use of electrosleeving for steam generator tube repairs.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the NRC-sponsored steam generator tube integrity program at ANL and FTI efforts relating to nondestructive examination (NDE) of electrosleeves, corrosion testing and cracking of steam generator tube samples, and potential areas of cooperation between FTI and ANL. Meeting participants included representatives from RES, NRR, FTI, and ANL. The significance of this meeting relates to facilitating

the resolution of NDE issues with electrosleeve repairs through information exchange between FTI and ANL.

FTI indicated during the meeting that there are two technical issues being evaluated with regard to NDE of electrosleeves. The first is to improve the ability to perform NDE depth sizing of flaws in electrosleeved tubes. This entails completing their determination of the cause for inconsistent ultrasonic testing sizing errors associated with flaw depth sizing and making subsequent procedural changes if necessary. The second is to develop an alternative go/no-go NDE method to determine whether the electrosleeve is degraded beyond the plugging limit. Actions resulting from the meeting included an agreement for FTI to provide ANL with electrosleeved tubes in exchange for ANL 's providing assistance to FTI for artificially inducing cracks in "parent" inconel tubes. In addition, NRC, ANL, and FTI took action to define the appropriate mechanisms for further cooperative efforts on the NDE issues.

The impact of resolving NDE issues related to the implementation of electrosleeving for SG tubes is to enable much more efficient and metallurgically "sound" repairs than are currently feasible. The proprietary FTI electrosleeving process produces a material that is, thus far, highly resistant to stress corrosion cracking, the phenomenon of primary concern for steam generator tube degradation.

Issuance of Regulatory Guide

Revision 3 to Regulatory 1.134, "Medical Evaluation of Licensed Personnel at Nuclear Power Plants," was issued on March 21, 1998.

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Stolen Cesium 137 Brachtherapy Sources

On March 16, 1998, the NRC responded to a request for Federal assistance from the State of North Carolina in locating 19 stolen cesium 137 brachytherapy sources. The sources had been reported missing from the Moses Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro in early March. Other Federal agencies responding included the Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation. The NRC coordinated the Federal support as the Lead Federal Agency with Region II staff providing the Federal On Scene Commander and a Public Affairs Coordinator. The Guilford County Emergency Operations Center in Greensboro served as the Joint Operations Center. AEOD, through the Headquarters Operations Center, supported the Regional team with communications, FBI Liaison and response coordination guidance. Although the sources were not recovered, the Federal activities were terminated on March 23 with the concurrence of all responders. North Carolina indicated that the Federal response had fulfilled the goals of the State request. All response activities, including deactivation, were accomplished in accordance with the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan.

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-II-98-017, Georgia Power Co. (Vogtle 2), INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT ON SITE
2. PNO-II-98-018, Gts Duratek, BAG HOUSE FIRE
3. PNO-III-98-022A, University of Minnesota, BRACHYTHERAPY MEDICAL EVENT (Update)
4. PNO-III-98-026, Detroit Macomb Hospital Corporation, POSSIBLE MEDICAL MISADMINISTRATION INVOLVING AN UNDERDOSE OF IRIDIUM-192
5. PNO-III-98-027, Grandview Hospital, ACCIDENTAL INCINERATION OF A NUCLEAR POWERED CARDIAC PACEMAKER
6. PNO-III-98-028, Harper Hospital, BRACHYTHERAPY MISADMINISTRATION (Wrong Treatment Site)
7. PNO-IV-98-013, Owensby and Kritikos, RADIOGRAPHY INCIDENT

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ENCLOSURE D

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE D

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

U.S. Enrichment Corporation

DFS staff attended a meeting with DOE and USEC personnel on March 25, 1998, to discuss Foreign Ownership, Control, or Influence (FOCI) packages received from companies and consortiums that are interested in acquiring USEC through the merger and acquisition sale process. The purpose of this meeting and a follow up meeting scheduled for March 27, 1998, is to make a FOCI pre-clearance determination from a security perspective as to whether these firms will be eligible for access to classified information. Additional FOCI information is being requested from each firm. In accordance with USEC's schedule submitted to the Commission, the FOCI pre-clearance determination is due by April 3, 1998.

During the week of March 16, 1998, two DFS representatives visited the Lawrence Livermore National Lab to tour USEC's AVLIS demonstration facility and to discuss the impending revision of the AVLIS classification guide. DOE has taken responsibility to prepare the first draft of the revision which is expected to be completed by June 1998.

Security Briefing

On March 24, 1998, a DFS representative conducted a general security briefing for the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards (FCSS), NMSS. The agenda included a discussion of categories and levels of classified information and security clearances; storage, transmission, reproduction and marking requirements for classified information; telecommunications procedures; and computer security requirements. Approximately 60 FCSS employees attended.

DFS will host its semi-annual Security Advisor Meeting on March 31, 1998. Topics include an update of the NRC drug testing program, changes to 10 CFR Part 10 - (Criteria and procedures for determining security clearance eligibility); security support provided to off-site meetings and hearings; and an update on new secure cellular telephone availability.

Restack

The next phase of the Restack project, upgrading the 12th floor, began March 24, 1998. Employees from the 11th floor are scheduled to be moved to the 12th floor on June 6, 1998.

Minor Revision of Design Basis Accident Dose Limits for Independent Spent Fuel Storage and Monitored Retrievable Storage Installations (Part 72)

A proposed rule that would amend the regulations governing the dose limits and dose calculational methodology used in design basis accident analyses for Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installations and Monitored Retrievable Storage Installations was published in the Federal Register on March 19, 1998 (63 FR 13372). The proposed rule would amend the design basis accident dose limits for these types of facilities to conform to the dose calculational methodology currently used in the regulations that specify standards for protection against radiation. The comment period for the proposed rule closes May 4, 1998.

Specific Domestic Licenses of Broad Scope for Byproduct Material (Part 33)

A document withdrawing an advance notice of proposed rulemaking that discussed possible changes to the regulations concerning specific domestic licenses of broad scope for byproduct material was published in the Federal Register on March 25, 1998 (63 FR 14381).

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests Received during
the 5-Day Period of March 20, 1998 - March 27, 1998:

ICF Information Technology, Inc., Master Delivery Order No. DR-98-0156. (FOIA/PA-98-116)

FOIA, point of contact to receive requests. (FOIA/PA-98-117)

Interstate Nuclear Services, Columbia, SC. (FOIA/PA-98-118)

Carolinas Virginia Tube(Test) Reactor, decommissioning.
(FOIA/PA-98-119)

Baxter Healthcare Corp., 1998 pre-enforcement hearing transcript,
Lic. # 52-21175-01. (FOIA/PA-98-120)

COMNJD 98-002, Reduction of Vulnerabilities in Emergency
Preparedness. (FOIA/PA-98-121)

OI 1997 Annual Report. (FOIA/PA-98-122)

Named individual's salary history. (FOIA/PA-98-123)

Tritium, human exposure rules, regulations, and effects.
(FOIA/PA-98-124)

Materials licenses for specific zip codes, expired.
(FOIA/PA-98-125)

Materials licenses for specific zip codes, active.
(FOIA/PA-98-126)

Advanced Medical Systems, NRC public meeting on 2/26/98 in Ohio.
(FOIA/PA-98-127)

Kewaunee plant, seismic event clarification, NRC response to
10/25/89 R.L. Nelson memo. (FOIA/PA-98-128)

Chief Financial Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Proposed Rule Signed by the CFO

On March 24, 1998, the Chief Financial Officer approved a proposed rule that amends 10 CFR Parts 170 and 171. These proposed amendments to the Commission's fee regulations are necessary to implement the requirements of Public Law 101-508 to recover 100 percent of the FY 1998 budget authority through fees. The proposed rule is consistent with the March 23, 1998, Staff Requirements Memorandum for SECY-98-034.

The proposed annual fees would increase by about 0.1 percent compared to FY 1997. The increase in the annual fees results primarily from a decrease in the number of licensees paying annual fees. The proposed change is consistent with NRC's intention, stated in the FY 1995 final rule, that beginning in FY 1996, annual fees would be stabilized by adjusting prior year annual fees by the percent change (plus or minus) in the NRC budget authority taking into consideration the estimated collections from Part 170 fees and the number of licensees paying fees.

The FY 1998 proposed annual fees are compared to those assessed for FY 1997 in the following table:

<u>Range of Annual Fees</u>		
Class of Licensees	FY 1997	Proposed FY 1998
Operating Power Reactors	\$2,978,000	\$2,980,000
Fuel Facilities	\$648,000 - \$2.6M	\$649,000 - \$2.6M
Uranium Recovery Facilities	\$22,300 - \$61,600	\$22,300 - \$61,800
Independent Spent Fuel Storage Facilities	\$282,000	\$283,000

<u>Range of Annual Fees</u>		
Transportation Approval Holders	\$1,000 - \$78,900	\$1,000 - \$78,900
Material Users	\$490 - \$23,500	\$490 - \$23,500

Other aspects of the proposed rule that the Commission should note are:

- The professional hourly rates for the reactor and materials programs would be revised based on the number of direct FTEs for FY 1998. The FY 1998 proposed hourly rate for the reactor program is \$124 per hour as compared to \$131 per hour for FY 1997. The FY 1998 proposed hourly rate for the materials program is \$121 per hour as compared to \$125 per hour for FY 1997.

The materials "flat" licensing fees and the export and import licensing fees would be revised to reflect the change in the hourly rates.

- §170.12(g) would be amended to add full cost recovery for resident inspectors and recovery of costs incurred within 30 days after issuance of the inspection report.
- A procedural change would be implemented whereby Part 170 fees would be assessed for activities performed during compensated overtime.
- §170.12(h) and §171.19 would be amended to provide additional methods of payment, such as credit cards.
- The NRC would continue to assess two fees for licensees that qualify as small entities under the NRC's size standards. In general, licensees with gross annual receipts of \$350,000 to \$5 million pay a maximum fee of \$1,800. A second or lower tier small entity fee of \$400 is in place for small entities with gross annual receipts of less than \$350,000 and small governmental jurisdictions with a population of less than 20,000. No change will be made in the amount of the small entity fees because the small entity fees are not based on the budget but are established at a level to reduce the impact of fees on small entities.

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Career Fair Attended in Anaheim, California

On March 26-27, 1998, Randall Brown, Office of Human Resources, and Larry Bell, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, attended the Annual National Convention and Career Fair of the National Society of Black Engineers held in Anaheim, California. There were a number of excellent applicants who indicated interest in the NRC.

Arrivals		
FISH, Eugene	Investigator	OI/RIV
GERHARDT, Charles	Sr Computer Specialist	OCIO
GRAY, Melvin	Project Manager	NRR
MOODY, Robert	Sr Auditor	OIG
SUBBARATNAM, R.	Project Manager	NRR
Retirements		
MULLIN, Jane	FOIA Coordinator	NRR
Departures		
GOLUB, Geoffrey	Reactor Systems Engineer	NRR

Office of Small Business & Civil Rights
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Hispanic Recruiting

Irene Little, Director, Office of Small Business and Civil Rights met with Mr. Ray Mellado, Advisor to the Publisher of Hispanic Engineer Magazine and Mr. Charles Marrero, President, Columbia Basin Minority Economic Development Association to discuss strategies for recruiting Hispanics into technical positions within the NRC. Also in attendance at this meeting were Henry Rubin, HR; Kathryn Greene, Jennifer Albright, NRR; and Jose Ibarra, Chairperson, Hispanic Employment Program Advisory Committee.

Mr. Mellado is also Chair of the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Conference (HENAAC). His discussion focussed on a recruitment strategy that emphasizes establishing relationships with faculty (specifically deans) of math-based departments at colleges with high percentages of Hispanic enrollment. Rice University serves as HENAAC's Co-Host. The Conference includes deans from colleges having heavy Hispanic enrollment throughout the country. Approximately 1,000 students (predominantly Hispanic) and 400 professionals (predominantly Hispanic) attend each year. 1998 is the tenth anniversary of the Conference; to be held in Houston, Texas on October 8-10, 1998. This conference will recognize several of its past HENAAC award recipients including Commissioner Nils Diaz.

HBCU Science and Technology Workshop

On March 25-26, 1998, Von Deloatch, Small Business Program Manager, SBCR, participated in an Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Science and Technology Cluster Technical Assistance Workshop, held at Winston-Salem State University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The Workshop was sponsored by staff from the White House Initiative on HBCU's. It provided training and assistance to HBCUs in taking advantage of Federal funding and research activities available to them.

Under Executive Order 12876, NRC is one of 30 Federal agencies required to provide assistance to HBCUs. Representatives from ten of these agencies participated in the Workshop and approximately 150 HBCU representatives from five states were in attendance. Dr. Richard Linton, Associate Vice-President for Research and Director-Sponsored Programs, from the University of North Carolina, was the keynote luncheon speaker for the event.

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE J

At the Conference, five students from HBCU's campuses submitted applications to participate in NRC Research at DOE National Labs. Funds for this research are budgeted through SBCR.

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE J

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Media Interest

There was media interest in new findings related to Yucca Mountain.

Commissioner McGaffigan wrote to The Day (New London, Conn.) regarding an editorial about commissioner interactions with Paul Blanch.

School Volunteers Program

The BEKS (Blair, Einstein, Kennedy, Springbrook) Science Fair had a large NRC contingent. participating were: Kien Chang, Dewey Whaley, Mysore Nataraja, Tim McCartin, and Harry Felsher, NMSS; Merilee Banic and Ray Wharton, NRR; and Kisha Bush, OCFO.

Laban Coblentz, OCM/SAJ, John Craig and Sudhamay Basu, RES; and Yen Ju Chen, NMSS, discussed Science Expo projects with Bealle E.S. students.

Jose Ibarra, AEOD, and Jim Park, NMSS, discussed electricity and rocks, respectively, at Burnt Mill E.S.

Louise Lovell, OCIO, is on the Network Operations and Programming Course Advisory Panel at Thomas Edison H.S. of Technology, providing advice and guidance on the proposed curriculum for computer careers.

Doug Coe, Dave Desaulniers, and Lawrence Kokajko, NRR, helped students with their science projects at the Woodfield E.S. Science Expo.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
98-41	Note To Editors: ACRS Meeting April 16
98-42	Note to Editors: ACRS Meeting April 17
98-43	NRC Order to Washington Public Power Supply System Confirms Agreement to Complete Fire Barrier Corrective Actions

Regions:	
I-98-32	NRC Proposes \$55,000 Civil Penalty Against PSE&G for Violation Stemming From Reactor Operators' Failure to Follow Procedures
I-98-33	Note to Editors: Millstone Meetings April 7-8
I-98-34	NRC Commissioner Diaz to Visit Millstone Nuclear Plant on April 6
I-98-35	NRC Staff Issues Confirmatory Action Letter to Consolidated Edison
II-98-22	NRC Staff Sets Enforcement Conference With FPC to Discuss Regulatory Concerns at Crystal River
II-98-23	NRC Staff Proposes to Fine FPL \$88,000 for Violations at the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant
II-98-24	NRC Staff Proposes \$5,500 Fine Against Kentucky Engineering and Testing Firm
II-98-25	NRC Staff Proposes to Fine CP&L \$55,000 for a Violation at the Harris Nuclear Power Plant
II-98-26	NRC Staff Issues Order Suspending License of Radiography Company in Puerto Rico
III-98-20	D.C. Cook Nuclear Plant Rated "Good" in Operations, Maintenance, and Plant Support, "Acceptable" in Engineering in Latest NRC Review
III-98-21	NRC Schedules Two Meetings at Quad Cities Nuclear Plant
IV-98-11	NRC to Meet With Entergy to Discuss Apparent Violations at Waterford 3 Nuclear Power Plant

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

IAEA Board of Governors Meeting

Jodi Lieberman attended the March 16-20 meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors. In that meeting, the Agency's draft Nuclear Safety Review for 1997, to which NRC program offices contributed, was discussed. Other nuclear safety related items on the agenda included discussion of potential action by the UN General Assembly to change the independent status of the United National Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), as well as the status of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE N

Office of the Secretary
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending March 27, 1998

Document	Date	Subject
Decision Documents Released to the Public		
1. SECY-97-287	12/12/97	Final Regulatory Guidance on Risk-Informed Regulation: Policy Issues
SRM on 97-287	3/19/98	(same)
Comm. Voting Record on 97-287	3/19/98	(same)
2. SRM on SECY-97-205	3/24/98	Staff Requirements: SECY-97-205 - Integration and Evaluation of Results From Recent Lessons-Learned Reviews
Comm. Voting Record on 97-205	3/24/98	(same)
Information Papers Released to the Public		
1. SECY-98-049	3/13/98	Status of NRC Research Conducted by the Russian Research Center (I.V. Kurchatov Institute) and the Institute of Nuclear Safety of the Russian Academy of Sciences

Commission Correspondence Released to the Public

1. Letter to the President, dated March 16, 1998, concerns Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Standards" (incoming of March 3, 1998, also released).
2. Letter to B. John Garrick, Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste, dated March 16, 1998, provides comments on the 1998 Strategic Plan and Priority Issues for the ACNW (incoming of December 23, 1997, also released).
3. Letter to Senator Olympia J. Snowe, dated March 20, 1998, provides the NRC's views on S. 270, a bill to provide the consent of Congress to the Texas Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Subcommittee Meeting on Human Factors; Notice of Meeting on April 17, 1998.
2. Private Fuel Storage, LLC; Docket No. 72-22-ISFSI-PSP; Establishment of Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (Moore/Shon/Cole).

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Presentation at NJ Dept. of Public Health

On March 20, 1998, Dr. Mohamed Shanbaky, Branch Chief, DNMS, gave a presentation to the New Jersey Department of Public Health on the NRC's regulations governing the use of byproduct materials in medicine. The NJ Megavoltage Radiation Oncology Committee had requested the presentation. The Committee is responsible for promulgating state regulations for use of radiation-producing equipment and radioactive materials in medicine. The committee is made up of staff from NJ Department of Public Health, physicians, hospital administrators, and members of the general public. The NRC regulatory process, including licensing of byproduct materials at hospitals, was discussed and questions were entertained.

Frankford Arsenal, PA

The former Frankford Arsenal, Frankford, PA, is a site on the list of formerly-licensed sites that the NRC is reviewing to ensure that facilities where licensed activities occurred and the license has been terminated are suitable for release for unrestricted use in accordance with current NRC guidelines. A letter dated March 10, 1998, has been received from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the ARMY (Environment, Safety and Occupational Health) indicating that the Army Material Command has requested transition of responsibility to the Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) program. This will allow the Army Corps of Engineers to complete the determination of FUDS eligibility. The Army has committed in this letter to seeing that the cleanup of this site proceeds as fast as possible to a satisfactory completion.

Participation in Materials Decommissioning Workshop

On March 19, 1998, Dr. Ronald Bellamy, Chief, Decommissioning and Laboratory Branch, DNMS, participated in an NRC-sponsored materials decommissioning workshop held in Rockville MD. The workshop focused on identifying and evaluating new and different approaches to the decommissioning review process for materials licenses. The workshop was attended by approximately 100 NRC licensees and Agreement State representatives. Comments were received to assist the staff in developing recommendations for improvements in the decommissioning process, and candidates were

solicited for a pilot program to implement improvements on a limited basis.

NRC Public Meeting on Schott Glass License Termination Request

On March 23, 1998, members of the RI Decommissioning and Laboratory Branch conducted an informational meeting open to public discussion regarding the Schott Glass Technologies, Inc. license termination request. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection also participated in the meeting by addressing questions related to the hazardous material that is co-mingled with the small percentage of thoriated glass in the capped landfill.

The Schott facility manufactured thoriated glass from 1969 to 1980, and is included in the NRC Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP). NRC completed its review of the licensee's Final Status survey and intends to terminate the license and remove the site from the SDMP list after notifying the Commission in accordance with the Staff Requirements Memorandum dated June 4, 1996.

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE P

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Florida Power and Light Company - St. Lucie

Representatives from the Florida Power and Light Company were in the Regional Office on March 23 for a discussion of their self-assessment of performance at the St. Lucie facility and the performance improvement program initiatives and results. The licensee discussed plant objectives, performance highlights, and employee concerns.

Virginia Power Company

Representatives from the Virginia Power Company were in the Regional Office on March 24 to present a self-assessment of performance for the North Anna Nuclear Facility. The licensee discussed performance trends, oversight activities, and action plans.

A team of inspectors and contractors from NRR completed an architect engineer (AE) inspection of the Surry facility. A public exit was held March 27 at the site. The Region was represented by the Director of the Division of Reactor Safety. No immediate operability concerns were identified. The report of the inspection is expected to be issued within forty five days.

Duke Power Company - Oconee

On March 25, 1998, representatives from Duke Power Company were in the Regional Office for a Management Meeting to provide an update to the Oconee Nuclear Station's Recovery Plan. The presentation included the licensee's view of the progress of their recovery plan and their expanded initiatives to further strengthen the plan.

Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO)

The Regional Administrator spoke at the New Engineering Managers Seminar at the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) on March 26.

On March 26, a Public Meeting between the NRC staff and the Institute for Nuclear Power (INPO) was held at the Atlanta Federal Center for an informal exchange of information regarding the NRC staff's and INPO's respective activities involving the

uses of PRA/PSA for inspection and evaluation of reactor licensees.

March 27, 1998

ENCLOSURE P

Region III
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Architect-Engineer Inspection Public Exit - Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station

On March 27, 1998, an Architect-Engineer Inspection public exit meeting was conducted at the Quad Cities plant site in Cordova, Illinois, between the management representatives of Commonwealth Edison Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting was held to discuss the preliminary findings of the special design inspection. The inspection, which began February 16, 1998, concluded on March 27, 1998. The six-member inspection team was led by Morris Branch from the NRC's headquarters office in Rockville, Maryland, and included five contract employees from the engineering firm of Stone & Webster. NRC Region III Regional Administrator A. Bill Beach participated in the meeting.

Management Meeting with Commonwealth Edison Company - Quad Cities Station

On March 27, 1998, a meeting was conducted at the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station in Cordova, Illinois, between management representatives from Commonwealth Edison Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on plans to start up Unit 2 and other issues affecting the station. NRC Region III Regional Administrator A. Bill Beach participated in the meeting.

The two Quad Cities reactors are shut down while the utility upgrades its procedures and systems which would be used to shut down the plant safely in the event of a fire.

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending March 27, 1998

Meeting to Discuss Regulatory Perspectives of Performance at Cooper Nuclear Station

On March 27, 1998, the Vice President, Nuclear of Nebraska Public Power District, met with the Deputy Regional Administrator, NRC Region IV; the Director, Division of Reactor Projects; and the Deputy Director, Division of Reactor Safety. During the meeting, the Vice President, Nuclear discussed the current efforts to improve engineering performance at Cooper Nuclear Station.

Meeting to Discuss River Bend Station Self-Assessment

On March 24, 1998, Entergy Operations, Inc. managers from the River Bend Station met with the Regional Administrator, NRC Region IV, and members of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation and Region IV staffs. During the meeting, the managers from River Bend Station presented a self-assessment of their performance and discussed the present configuration and operation of the standby gas treatment system in relation to the system design and licensing bases.

Predecisional Enforcement Conference with Entergy Operations, Inc.

A predecisional enforcement conference was held with representatives of Waterford Steam Electric Station, Unit 3, on March 26, 1998, in the Region IV, Arlington, Texas, office. The purpose of the meeting, which was open to the public, was to provide the licensee the opportunity to discuss six apparent violations related to how they resolved problems with instrument and valve position uncertainty with the High Pressure Safety Injection System and changes made to the Emergency Feedwater System Technical Specification bases.

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending March 27, 1998

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, <u>NO. 10</u>					
OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Gerke	03/31 2318 RHOB	10:00	GAO, EPRI	Energy Deregulation	Reps. Calvert/Roemer Energy and Environment Science
Gerke	04/01 2154 RHOB	9:30	OMB, GAO	Results of Government- wide Audit of Federal Agencies	Reps. Horn/Kucinich Gov't Management, Info & Technology Government Reform & Oversight
Gerke	04/01 342 DSOB	10:00	TBA	Readiness of Federal Computer System for Year 2000	Senators Thompson/Glenn Governmental Affairs
Gerke	04/28 SR-253	9:30	TBA	Year 2000 Computer Problem	Sen. McCain/Hollings Commerce, Science & Transportation

Congress will be in recess from the end of this week until April 20th.