

July 2, 1997

SECY 97-135

For: The Commissioners

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

Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING JUNE 27, 1997

Contents

Enclosure

Nuclear Reactor Regulation		A
Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards		B
Nuclear Regulatory Research		C*
Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data		D*
General Counsel		E*
Administration	F	
Chief Information Officer		G
Chief Financial Officer	H*	
Personnel	I*	
Small Business & Civil Rights		J*
Enforcement		K*
State Programs	L*	
Public Affairs		M
International Programs		N*
Office of the Secretary		O
Region I		P
Region II		P
Region III		P
Region IV		P*
Executive Director for Operations		Q*
Congressional Affairs		R*

*No input this week.

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Root Cause/Human Performance/Trending Workshop

From June 17-20, 1997, Garmon West, Jr., of the Human Factors Assessment Branch (HHFB) participated in the 1997 Third Annual Root Cause/Human Performance/Trending Industry Workshop in Oak Brook, Illinois. The workshop was attended by representatives from 45 nuclear power plants, several consultants and vendors, and representatives from INPO, EPRI, several corporate offices, universities and foreign countries. The workshop focused on root-cause analysis techniques, corrective action implementation and effectiveness, and trending. Dr. West presented a paper titled, "Criteria for Review of Root-Cause Analysis Programs," based on evaluation criteria in NUREG-1545 (February 1997). The paper described the staff's criteria for reviewing licensee root-cause analysis programs, as well as corrective action plans, and the methods that NRC inspectors can use to determine the adequacy of such programs.

South Texas Project Graded QA SER

The NRR staff is completing a safety evaluation on the South Texas Project (STP) Quality Assurance (QA) Plan revision which incorporates Graded QA. STP is a volunteer pilot plant for the risk-informed Graded QA initiative. A draft Safety Evaluation Report (SER) is in concurrence and the staff plans to forward the SER to the Commission in July.

Completion of Update to SRP Chapter 7, Instrumentation and Control Systems

On June 23, 1997, the staff from the Instrumentation and Controls Branch (HICB) met with CRGR to discuss the final version of the update to SRP Chapter 7, Instrumentation and Controls. The primary revision to this SRP chapter was to incorporate the review approach and criteria for acceptance of digital I&C system modifications to operating plants. At the meeting, the CRGR reviewed the SRP Chapter 7 update and recommended that it be issued. Also, by letter dated June 23, 1997, the ACRS indicated their agreement with the SRP Chapter 7 update and recommended its issuance. In addition, both the CRGR and ACRS supported the staff's endorsement of EPRI topical report TR-106439, "Guidance on Evaluation and Acceptance of Commercial Grade Digital Equipment for Nuclear Safety Applications," which addresses methods for dedicating commercial digital equipment for use in safety systems. The staff plans to publish the final version of the SRP Chapter 7 update and issue the safety evaluation approving EPRI TR-106439 by the end of July 1997.

Oconee Nuclear Station, Units 1, 2, and 3

On June 20, 1997, with Oconee Unit 1 in cold shutdown and Units 2 and 3 at full power, during the performance of a TS-required surveillance test of the ability of the Lee Station Gas Turbine System to supply power to the Oconee Unit 1 emergency bus, power was lost to Oconee Unit 1 from the Lee Station when an operator at the Lee Station failed to follow the procedure. Keowee Hydro Units 1 and 2 received an auto-start signal. The Keowee Unit 1 generator failed to develop a generator field and, thus, was not able to provide power to the Oconee Unit 1 emergency bus. Because power was available from the station switchyard, Oconee Unit 1 power supply was automatically transferred to the startup source and power was restored to Oconee Unit 1 in about 30 seconds. The licensee has attributed this to aging of a fuse in the field flashing circuit, which may be aggravated by the design that causes field flashing current to be applied earlier in the startup sequence for an emergency start (when the voltage and frequency are lower) than for a non-emergency startup. The fuse was replaced and Keowee Unit 1 was successfully tested. The licensee has committed, as a short-term action, to replace the fuse each time a Keowee unit receives an emergency start. The long-term resolution is under investigation.

On June 23, 1997, following a test of the Lee Station, buses were being returned to their normal lineup by performing dead bus transfers of certain switchgear. During these bus transfers, power was lost to the Keowee Unit 1 auxiliaries when fuses blew in the closing coil DC control power circuitry for both breakers providing the power supply. The fuses have been replaced and Keowee Unit 1 has been tested satisfactorily. An Augmented Inspection Team investigation of both the June 20 and 23 events starts on June 30, 1997.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Director's Decision on 2.206 Petition

On June 18, 1997, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission issued a Director's Decision which denied a 10 CFR Part 2.206 Petition filed on behalf of "Don't Waste Michigan" and the Lake Michigan Federation. The Petition requested that the NRC take action to prohibit the loading of Model VSC-24 ventilated storage casks for spent fuel storage until the certificate of compliance, safety analysis report, and safety evaluation report are amended based on concerns raised by the Petitioners' engineering consultant, and an independent, third-party review of the VSC-24 design is conducted. The Director's Decision concluded that there is not an adequate basis for granting the Petitioners' request.

Appeal by the Prairie Island Dakota Indian Tribe

On June 13, 1997, the Prairie Island Dakota Indian Tribe appealed the Minnesota State Court of Appeals decision affirming that the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) had acted appropriately in ending the State-mandated siting process for an away-from-reactor storage site for spent fuel from Northern States Power's (NSP) Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant. NSP was required by Minnesota law to attempt to site such a facility in order to continue limited dry cask storage on site at Prairie Island. The EQB's decision halted the siting process for the proposed Goodhue County Independent Spent Fuel Storage Facility. NSP has 20 days to respond to the appeal and the Minnesota Supreme Court then has 30 days to decide if it will hear the case.

Physical Protection Discussions with GOSATOMNADZOR

On June 9-13, 1997, staff from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission met with representatives of the Russian regulatory agency GOSATOMNADZOR (GAN) at the GAN Northeast Regional Headquarters in St. Petersburg, Russia, to discuss physical protection issues. This activity, which took place under Priority 6 of the Lisbon Safety Program, included a visit to the Leningrad Nuclear Power Plant in Sosnovy Bor, to familiarize the NRC delegation with the general organization of the facility physical protection system and with GAN's program of physical protection inspections at this facility. Activities also included discussion of NRC and GAN approaches to the development of physical protection regulatory documents and practices, and an exchange of regulatory documents. GAN representatives expressed interest in conducting joint workshops and inspections, and in NRC review and development support for GAN physical protection regulatory documents. Formal proposals from GAN regarding these activities are expected.

June 27, 1997
B

ENCLOSURE

Department of Energy/Nuclear Regulatory Commission Meeting on the
Exploratory Studies Facility

On June 11, 1997, Division of Waste Management staff conducted a video conference with the Department of Energy (DOE) and its contractors to discuss progress in the excavation of the exploratory studies facility (ESF) at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, and technical issues related to geologic repository design. Representatives from the State of Nevada; Clark and Nye Counties, Nevada; the U.S. Geological Survey; and the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses also participated. The items that were discussed included the status of ESF construction, an update on the status of scientific studies, and near-term plans for DOE's engineering design program. DOE also briefed the staff on preliminary plans for a proposed east-west drift to gather additional site characterization data on hitherto unexplored portions of the potential repository block. DOE's current plans call for east-west drift construction to begin in the Fall of 1997. Finally, DOE reviewed many of the technical items that will be addressed as part of an enhanced site characterization program package.

Meeting on the Exploratory Studies Facility Design Control
Process

On June 12, 1997, Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff visited the Department of Energy (DOE) and its Management and Operating Contractor in Las Vegas, Nevada, to review material related to quality assurance, Exploratory Studies Facility (ESF) design, and the design control process. Representatives from the State of Nevada observed this meeting. In June 1995, as a part of its ESF in-field verification activities, the NRC staff had identified a number of open items regarding the implementation of DOE's design control process. During the 1997 meeting, the NRC staff looked at new information provided by DOE that might permit the closing of certain open items associated with these activities. Based on a review of the information provided by DOE during the 1997 meeting, the NRC staff believes that many of the open items could be closed.

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Contract Awards

On June 24, 1997, a cost plus fixed fee contract was awarded to Scientech, Inc. The contractor will provide personnel possessing a wide range of technical and scientific disciplines on a task-ordering basis to assist the Office of International Programs staff with the transfer of NRC regulatory and safety methodology to the Central/East European (CEE) and Former Soviet Union (FSU) countries. The total contract amount is approximately \$527K for the base period (two years) and \$278K for the optional period (three years). The contract award was made in 2.5 months.

On June 23, 1997, a contract was awarded to Performance, Safety and Health Associates for "Root Cause Investigations Improvements." The contractor is responsible for providing support services which will aid NRC inspection staff in their determination of the root cause of human performance related events by upgrading the Human Performance Investigation Process (HPIP) module(s). This cost plus fixed fee contract is for an initial base period of 8 months, valued at approximately \$127K. There is also an 11-month option period with optional tasks that may be exercised (the total value of the option period is approximately \$118K).

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Significant FOIA/PA Requests Received during the 5-Day Period of
June 20-26, 1997:

Beryllium processing plant, Hazelton, PA, for the period 1956 through 1980. (FOIA/PA-97-224)

Quest Corporation, Tulsa, OK, 4/16/91 radiation leak incident and possible exposure to named employees. (FOIA/PA-97-225)

OI file re investigation on self, conducted between 3/3/78 and 4/20/78. (FOIA/PA-97-226)

Atlas Corporation uranium mill and tailings pile, Moab, Utah. (FOIA/PA-97-227)

AAR Manufacturing, Inc., Livonia, MI, License STB-0362 and Docket 040-00235. (FOIA/PA-97-228)

Office of Investigations Annual Report-1996. (FOIA/PA-97-229)

Advanced Medical Systems, Inc., Cleveland, OH, re close monitoring of ground water testing. (FOIA/PA-97-230)

Ohio Bureau of Radiation Protection, 3/10/97 radioactive source incident in Marion, OH. (FOIA/PA-97-231)

Admission of problems solicited by NRC, October 1996, regarding utilities meeting technical terms of license. (FOIA/PA-97-232)

License SNM-551 and SNM-1067, 1962 to present. (FOIA/PA-97-233)

Philadelphia Electric Co., alleged management misconduct at the Limerick site. (FOIA/PA-97-234)

Advanced Medical Systems, Inc., Cleveland, OH, regarding Concern No. 5 of NRC's 5/23/97 letter to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS). (FOIA/PA-97-235)

Advanced Medical Systems (AMS), Inc., Cleveland, OH, 4/11/96 AMS letter referenced in NRC's 5/23/97 letter to NEORS. (FOIA/PA-97-236)

Contract with IHS for microfiche FSAR service - 1983. (FOIA/PA-97-237)

Office of Personnel
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Arrivals

FORMAN, Alice	SUMMER TECHNICAL INTERN (OPFT)	NMSS
LOOTENS, Cristine	SUMMER	
ADMINISTRATIVE (OPFT)	ACRS	
NAGLE, James	SUMMER CLERICAL (OPFT)	IRM
UMANA, Jessica	SUMMER CLERICAL (OPFT)	NMSS

Retirements

OLSEN, William	RESIDENT INSPECTOR (PFT)	RI
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Departures

DAWSON, Howard	REACTOR ENGINEER (PFT)	NRR
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Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Media Interest

Chairman Jackson interviewed by the Bridgewater Courier-Journal (NJ) for a profile story.

OPA Regions and headquarters staff handled a large volume of calls regarding the Commission briefing on operating reactors and plants on the "watch list."

Six media representatives attended an exit meeting at St. Lucie on preliminary results of an inspection on the Employee Speakout program.

School Volunteers Program

OPA hosted a group of Montgomery County teachers at NRC for a day, where they learned about reactor technology, radiation and its health effects, and careers at NRC. They also toured the Operations Center and attended the Commission briefing on operating reactors. Participating were: Commissioner McGaffigan, Joe Gitter, AEOD, Joe DeCicco, NMSS, and Duane Potter, OP.

Press Releases

Headquarters:

97-93	Note To Editors: ACRS Subcommittee Meeting July 21-22
97-94	NRC Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards to Meet July 9-11
97-95	NRC Staff Identifies Nuclear Power Plants Warranting Increased Regulatory Attention
97-96	NRC Seeks Public Comment on Draft Guidance for Power Reactor Licensees on Using Risk Information for Licensing Basis Changes
97-97	NRC Issues Confirmatory Order to Envirocare

Regions:

I-97-71	NRC Proposes \$210,000 Fine for Pennsylvania Utility for Several Alleged Violations at Susquehanna Plant
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June 27, 1997
M

ENCLOSURE

I-97-72 NRC Staff to Meet With PSE&G; Regional Administrator to Hold Quarterly Press Conference

I-97-73 NRC Staff to Meet With NU, Public on Millstone

I-97-74 Note to Editors: Meeting at Vermont Yankee July 1

II-97-47 NRC Names New Senior Resident Inspector at North Anna Nuclear Power Plant

II-97-48 NRC Staff to Hold Meeting With FP&L at St. Lucie on June 26 to Discuss Results of Inspection of Employee Concerns Program

II-97-49 NRC Staff Plans Performance Review at B&W Facilities in Lynchburg, Virginia

II-97-50 NRC Sends Inspection Team to Oconee Nuclear Power Plant

III-97-61 NRC Staff to Hold Conference With Commonwealth Edison to Discuss Apparent Violations at Zion Nuclear Power Station

III-97-62 Latest NRC Staff Review Rates Clinton Plant "Good" in Maintenance "Adequate" in Plant Operations, Engineering, and Plant Support

III-97-63 NRC Names New Senior Resident Inspector at Clinton Nuclear Power Plant

III-97-64 NRC Staff Proposes \$50,000 Fine Against Commonwealth Edison for Inadequate Design and Maintenance Controls at Quad Cities

III-97-65 Meetings on Clinton Plant Scheduled for July 2 and 3; NRC Regional Administrator to Meet with News Media

June 27, 1997
M

ENCLOSURE

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Commission Decision Documents Released to the Public

	<u>Document</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>
1.	SRM on Staff M970424B/ SECY-97-072	6/24/97	Staff Requirements-Briefing on Response to Arthur Andersen Study Recommendations, 1:30 P.M., Thursday, April 24, 1997 <u>and</u> SECY-97-072 - Staff Action Plan to Improve the Senior Management Meeting Process
2.	Commission Senior Voting Record Management Meeting Process on SECY-97-072	6/24/97	Staff Action Plan to Improve the Senior
3.	SECY-97-085	4/21/97	Proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the U.S. and Switzerland
	-- SRM on 97-085		6/17/97(same)
	-- Commission Voting Record on SECY-97-085	6/17/97	(same)
4.	SECY-97-087	4/22/97	Oklahoma Agreement State Negotiations: State Requests that Major Facilities Undergoing Site Decommissioning Not Be Relinquished to State
	-- SRM on 97-087		6/19/97(same)
	-- Commission Voting Record on SECY-97-087	6/19/97	(same)
5.	SECY-97-096	5/2/97	Memorandum of Understanding and Interagency Agreement Between the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the Closure of High-Level Waste Storage Tanks at the Savannah River Site

June 27, 1997
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ENCLOSURE

-- SRM on 97-096 6/19/97(same)
-- Commission 6/19/97 (same)
 Voting Record
 on SECY-97-096

Information Papers Released to the Public

<u>Document</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>
SECY-97-125	6/18/97	Comments on the Draft Branch Technical Position on Low-Level Radioactive Waste Performance Assessment (NUREG-1573)
SECY-97-126	6/19/97	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending June 13, 1997

Commission Correspondence Released to the Public

1. Letter to Representative Bob Filner dtd 6/18/97 concerns uranium mill tailings at the Atlas Corp. uranium mill in Moab, Utah
2. Letter to Utah Governor Michael O. Leavitt dtd 6/19/97 concerns the construction and operation of an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation in Utah
3. Letter to President Clinton dtd 6/19/97 concerns Agreement for Cooperation between the U.S. and Switzerland

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. 21st Century Technologies, Inc.; Docket No. 30-30266-EA; Establishment of Atomic Safety and Licensing Board

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Meeting with Westinghouse Electric Corporation to Discuss
Remediation of the Waltz Mill Site

On June 19, 1997, representatives from NRC Region I and the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analysis (CNWRA), an NRC contractor, visited the Westinghouse Waltz Mill site in Madison, Pennsylvania to examine site conditions relating to soil and groundwater contamination. Region I and CNWRA staffs are performing a review of technical issues relating to the characterization and proposed remediation of groundwater and soil contamination at the site to assess a remediation plan submitted by the licensee. The Westinghouse Waltz Mill site is listed on the NRC's Site Decommissioning Management Plan due to the presence of the soil and groundwater contamination.

Mountainside Hospital: Predecisional Enforcement Conference

On June 25, 1997, a predecisional enforcement conference was conducted to discuss the findings of an NRC inspection conducted on April 30 and May 1, 1997 at Mountainside Hospital in Montclair, New Jersey.

During the Conference, one apparent violation of license condition and one apparent deviation regarding the performance of the licensee's High Dose Rate Afterloading operations were discussed. The apparent violation involved failure to have the medical physicist, specified on the license, perform all the required dosimetry calculations and the deviation involved failure of the medical physicist to be present during patient treatments. The licensee provided their actions taken to correct and prevent recurrence. The Region is developing the appropriate enforcement response.

Predecisional Enforcement Conference With Merck and Company

A predecisional enforcement conference was held with Merck and Company on June 23, 1997 to discuss the findings of an NRC inspection conducted on April 8-11 and April 24, 1997. The conference focused on two apparent violations involving the loss of a package containing 885 microcuries of iodine-125. The licensee discussed its immediate response at the time of the incident and its subsequent corrective actions to prevent recurrence. On June 26, NRC Region I issued a Severity Level III violation (with no civil penalty).

Salem Generating Station

Hubert J. Miller, Regional Administrator for Region I, briefed

June 27, 1997

ENCLOSURE

P

the Commission on Wednesday, June 25, 1997 on the Salem Generating Station Unit 2 readiness for restart. Mr. Miller discussed key restart issues, including equipment and system performance, review of the licensee's restart plan, the reviews performed by the Salem Assessment Panel, and the inspection activities conducted to assess restart readiness. In addition, the initial findings of the Readiness Assessment Team Inspection (RATI) were discussed. The official RATI exit meeting was held on Friday, June 27, 1997. The licensee is preparing to enter Mode 3 by July 5, 1997 and plans to startup by July 17, 1997.

Three Mile Island

At 12:14PM, on June 21, 1997, the Three Mile Island Unit 1 reactor tripped from full power following 616 days of operation due to an energetic failure of one of the unit generator output breakers under ground fault conditions. The licensee declared an Unusual Event (UE) at 12:26 p.m. based on loss of offsite power. The licensee terminated the UE at 9:24 p.m.

The licensee's preliminary assessment is that a high contact resistance fault internal to the breaker developed, based on phase-to-phase current imbalances that were noted to exist on this output breaker two days prior to the breaker failure. This condition led to the loss of one of two offsite power busses. The other unit generator output breaker opened following the first breaker's ground fault condition; however, it re-closed and this led to the opening of breakers associated with the second offsite bus and the complete loss of offsite power. Evaluation of the root causes of both unit output breaker failures is still in progress.

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Duke Power Company

Catawba

On June 23, the Regional Administrator and other NRC staff were at the Catawba facility to present the results of the latest Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP). This SALP report noted demonstrated performance improvement to a superior level in all areas except maintenance. Following the presentation, a public meeting was held with local officials.

Florida Power and Light Company - St. Lucie

On June 26, the Director Division of Reactor Safety and members of the Regional staff held a public exit meeting with the licensee at the St. Lucie facility. The purpose of the exit meeting was to discuss the results of a recent inspection of the Employee Concerns program. This open exit meeting was attended by six media representatives including both local newspapers and television stations. The inspection concluded there were no violations of NRC requirements and the licensee should provide employees more feedback on the final resolution of concerns.

Tennessee Valley Authority - Sequoyah

Representatives from Sequoyah Nuclear Plant were in the Regional Office on June 27 to attend a predecisional enforcement conference. The NRC discussed apparent violations of NRC requirements surrounding a Unit 1 inadvertent drain down of the reactor coolant system during a refueling outage. The licensee presented the results of their investigation of the root causes to identified problems and their corrective actions. Licensee attendees included some of the operators on-shift during the draindown event.

Region III
Items of Interest
Week Ending June 27, 1997

Meeting with Wisconsin Electric Co. - Point Beach

On June 26, 1997, the NRC staff met with Wisconsin Electric Power Co. representatives in Mishicot, Wisconsin, to review the licensee's completion of commitments under a Confirmatory Action Letter, issued January 3, 1997, and the readiness of Point Beach Unit 2 to resume operations. The staff concluded that the Confirmatory Action Letter commitments had been met. Additional work is underway at the plant in preparation for the Unit 2 restart, and NRC inspection activities are continuing. Two license amendments, which are necessary for the unit's restart, are currently being reviewed by the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

Meeting with Commonwealth Edison Co. - Zion and Dresden

On June 26, 1997, the Region III staff met in the Regional Office with Commonwealth Edison Company representatives to discuss the status of plant performance improvement activities at the Zion Nuclear Power Station.

On June 27, 1997, the Region III staff met in the Regional Office with Commonwealth Edison Company representatives to discuss the status of the utility's design and engineering activities in response to a November 11, 1996, Confirmatory Action Letter and other performance improvement program activities at the Dresden Nuclear Power Station.

Midwest Compact Commission Halts Low-Level Waste Facility Siting Activities

On June 26, 1997, the Midwest Compact Commission board members voted to cease development activities for a regional low-level radioactive waste disposal facility. The State of Ohio was to be the host state for the disposal facility. The Commission members, at the meeting, determined that activities involving development of a low-level radioactive waste site should cease immediately. The decision provides for funding through September 30, 1997, for the Ohio Radioactive Waste Facility Development Authority and the Ohio Department of Health proposed agreement state program. In terminating the siting activities, the Commission cited the decreasing volume of radioactive waste, continued access to disposal facilities, and high cost of new disposal facilities.

The Midwest Compact includes Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri.

Illinois Delays Target Date for Central Midwest Compact Waste

June 27, 1997

ENCLOSURE

P

Facility

Illinois Governor Jim Edgar signed legislation on June 26, 1997, which extends the target date for opening the Central Midwest Compact Low-Level Waste Facility from 2003 to 2012. The states of Illinois and Kentucky are members of the Compact. The legislation also gives neighboring local governments a role in site approval. The Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety was directed to conduct a two-year study of issues affecting the siting process.

June 27, 1997
P

ENCLOSURE