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INFORMATION REPORT date

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November 10, 1999

SECY-99-265

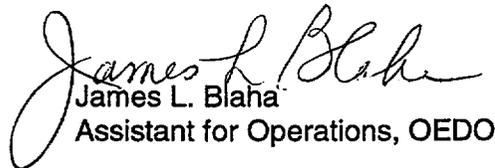
For: The Commissioners
From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: SECY-99-265 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK
ENDING NOVEMBER 5, 1999

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Enclosure

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*No input this week.


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PDR. COMMS NRCC Weekly Inform.

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 5, 1999

EPRI Y2K Workshop - October 26-28, 1999

A Division of Engineering staff member attended the EPRI 7th Y2K Embedded Systems Workshop in San Diego on October 26-28, 1999. The general session had nearly 300 attendees and involved generation, transmission and distribution, and telecommunications issues. The nuclear session had about 30 attendees. Significant discussion topics included status updates, recent drills and exercises, and contingency planning activities. There is general consensus that nearly all entities are Y2K ready and there is a high confidence in grid stability and reliability. The NRC attendee provided an update on nuclear power plant Y2K readiness status, discussed the agency's contingency planning activities, and discussed lessons learned from the October 15, 1999, Y2K drill. Details of the conference and useful ideas are being provided to the agency's Y2K contingency planning task force.

Meeting Between NRC and NEI Regarding Changes to Guidance Documents to Implement 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4)

On October 25, 1999, IQMB and SPSB staff held a public meeting with representatives from the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) to provide feedback on NEI's proposed guidance in final draft NUMARC 93-01, Section 11, "Assessment of Risk Resulting from Performance of Maintenance Activities," dated October 8, 1999, to implement 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4). During the meeting, the NRC staff identified three issues that needed clarification in Section 11 before the staff could pursue endorsement in Regulatory Guide 1.160. These issues include adequate guidance on (1) SSCs in the scope of 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), (2) managing risk due to maintenance, and (3) an acceptable definition of unavailability. The NRC and NEI staff presented their views on these issues and substantial progress was made on clarifications needed in Section 11 to address them. The NRC staff plans to have a draft Regulatory Guide, by December 1999, that would endorse the NEI guidance with possible exceptions.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
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Preliminary Certificate of Compliance and Safety Evaluation Report for NAC-UMS Universal Storage System Completed

The Spent Fuel Project Office staff has completed its review of the safety analysis report submitted by NAC International Inc. (NAC) for the UMS Universal Storage System (NAC-UMS). The NAC-UMS system is a transport-compatible dry storage system that uses a stainless steel transportable storage canister stored within the central cavity of a vertical concrete cask. It is designed to store up to 24 pressurized water reactor or up to 56 boiling water reactor spent fuel assemblies. The storage canister is also designed to be compatible with the NAC-UMS transport cask, which is under review.

The staff's preliminary certificate of compliance and safety evaluation report will be made available for public comment. This is the first step in the rulemaking process to include the NAC-UMS in the list of casks available for use by holders of general licenses pursuant to 10 CFR Part 72. The first anticipated use of the NAC-UMS will be during the decommissioning of the Maine Yankee site in Spring 2001.

Department of Veterans Affairs National Radiation Safety Committee Meeting

On October 28, 1999, a staff member of the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety attended the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) National Radiation Safety Committee (NRSC) meeting as an observer. The NRSC approved the National Health Physics Program (NHPP) Director's plan and milestones for the implementation of a centrally controlled program. (The plan and milestones were requested by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in a letter dated May 4, 1999, to Dr. Kiser, Under Secretary for Health, as a prerequisite for a meeting with NRC management. This letter put NRC's review of DVA's master materials license (MML) application on hold pending the meeting with Dr. Kiser and implementation of the DVA centrally controlled radiation safety program.) The NHPP Director briefed the committee on their progress in implementing the program, e.g., review of licensing actions, inspections, internal enforcement actions, and general progress on the MML application. The staff expects to receive a request from DVA within two months for a management meeting with NRC to discuss DVA progress.

Third Public Meeting on Control of Solid Materials

On November 1-2, 1999, the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety held the third of four facilitated public meetings to discuss issues and alternatives related to control of solid materials at licensed facilities at Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Headquarters. Attendance at the meeting included representatives from citizens groups, licensees and licensee organizations, the medical community, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy (DOE), state agencies, tribal governments, scrap and recycling companies, and steel manufacturers. The meeting agenda consisted of eight sessions corresponding to the content of the Issues Paper.

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Several attendees noted that: (1) a national standard would be useful to provide consistency in licensing approach; (2) there is a need to consider DOE materials; and (3) there is also a need to consider the variety of materials that move in and out of facilities every day.

Some attendees were concerned that the outcome of this rule is already pre-determined, questioned whether release of material by MSC in Tennessee is lawful, and also questioned NRC's oversight of Tennessee. One concern expressed was that NRC's contractor on technical basis development, Science Application International Corporation, should not work on further reports because of conflict of interest problems arising from their work on BNFL, and also indicated that Draft NUREG-1640 should be withdrawn because of these conflict of interest issues. The staff is currently reviewing these issues.

Some considerations regarding potential alternatives expressed by attendees included: (1) steel manufacturers indicated that no radioactive steel should be released into recycle because of concerns over potential economic disruption if their consumers do not want their products, and because of past problems with orphan sources in incoming materials; (2) the Health Physics Society noted that it has a position paper supporting ANSI N13.12 and suggested NRC consider adopting the ANSI standard which contains criteria for clearance of material; and (3) some attendees opposed any further release of material into unrestricted use and also recommended recapture of material released already.

There was some discussion at the end of the meeting among attendees about looking at possible rulemaking in a more segregated way, i.e., on a material by material basis as to what alternatives might be acceptable.

The discussions provided useful information which the staff will use as part of developing a paper for the Commission in March 2000. The next public meeting will be held in Chicago, Illinois, on December 7-8, 1999. An Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW) meeting is scheduled for the week of December 13, 1999, to discuss ACNW comments on the Issues Paper.

Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant Seismic Modifications

On November 3, 1999, the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards held a meeting to discuss the ongoing seismic modifications at the Paducah gaseous diffusion plant at Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Headquarters. It was a noticed public meeting between NRC, the Department of Energy (DOE), and the U.S. Enrichment Corporation (USEC). No member of the general public or press attended. The purpose of the meeting was to resolve scheduling problems for USEC's completion of required seismic modifications for two process buildings at the Paducah facility. USEC is currently operating those buildings under a Notice of Enforcement Discretion until a firm completion date can be incorporated into an amendment request for the compliance plan item requiring the seismic modifications. Completion of the seismic modifications requires USEC's access to DOE controlled areas called DOE Material Storage Areas (DMSAs). These are areas within the process buildings within which DOE has stored material and waste with possible uranium and other radionuclide contamination. The uranium contamination raises nuclear criticality concerns such that access is restricted until the exact amount and enrichment is known through a characterization process. Once characterized, the nuclear criticality risks can be determined and minimized while the seismic

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modification work is done. DOE presented a schedule for characterization of the DMSA's, which they felt still needed improvement. The schedule is adversely impacted by availability of qualified operators to do the work. DOE and USEC agreed to see if other work can be reprioritized, which would allow additional qualified operators to work on the DMSA's which would help expedite the schedule. USEC committed to provide an optimized schedule for NRC and DOE to review based on USEC's ability to implement the seismic modifications. This schedule is expected in three weeks. USEC, DOE and NRC agreed to convene another open public meeting on November 15, 1999, to review the assumptions USEC would use in developing their optimized schedule.

ABB-Combustion Strike Status

On November 4, 1999, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) was informed by ABB-Combustion Engineering, Hematite, Missouri, that the machinists union had voted to accept the company's contract proposal. The outcome of the vote means that the machinists will not join in the teamsters union strike at the facility which began on September 28, 1999. With regard to the current status of the facility, following appropriate training which was observed by the NRC, management staff commenced operation of the major process lines. The licensee initiated startup of the uranium hexafluoride to uranium dioxide conversion line and fuel rod assembly in mid-October. Pelletizing operations began in late October. NRC inspectors will continue to monitor the ongoing activities at the facility.

Abandonment of Wells at the Church Rock Uranium Mill Tailings Site

On October 26, 1999, the Division of Waste Management staff visited the Church Rock Uranium Mill Tailings site near Gallup, New Mexico, to observe the United Nuclear Corporation (UNC) process for abandonment of wells. Roughly 180 wells, which are not part of the current groundwater corrective action program, were approved for abandonment by a Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) letter dated May 3, 1999, after concurrence by the Environmental Protection Agency, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), and the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency. The NRC letter required that UNC meet well abandonment requirements of the New Mexico State Engineer Office.

The wells are mainly 2 inches in diameter, with some up to 6 inches, and vary from about 20 to 330 feet in depth. The NRC staff, accompanied by staff from NMED, determined that the well abandonment process implemented by UNC, essentially grouting the well casings with bentonite mud, cutting the top of the casing off a few feet below the land surface, and capping the wells, met or exceeded the State Engineer requirements. UNC will prepare and issue a report subsequent to completion of the process.

Public Meeting in Nevada on Repository Defense-in-Depth

On November 2, 1999, Division of Waste Management (DWM) staff hosted a public meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada, to discuss the staff's current thinking on repository defense-in-depth. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting including representatives from the state of Nevada; Nye, Clark, Lincoln, and Churchill Counties; Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board; and several state legislators. The meeting was part of the staff's plan for clarifying how defense-in-depth applies to the regulation of a possible repository at Yucca Mountain (see

SECY-99-186). With the assistance of a facilitator, the staff conducted a roundtable discussion involving the Department of Energy (DOE), the state of Nevada, and other interested stakeholders. Representatives of the state of Nevada expressed the view that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission should not allow engineered barriers to be relied on to compensate for unsuitable natural features of a repository site. DWM staff indicated that both natural and engineered barriers would have to make significant contribution to waste isolation. Clark County representatives expressed a somewhat similar view that they saw a noticeable shift to more reliance on engineered barriers. DOE representatives stated that they were looking at design changes that would distribute waste containment over multiple barriers.

Department of Energy International Conference on Deep Geologic Repositories

On October 31 through November 2, 1999, the Department of Energy (DOE) hosted an International Conference on Geologic Repositories in Denver, Colorado. The conference highlighted global progress on the management of nuclear materials and waste, and provided a forum to discuss ongoing and planned activities to develop geologic repositories. Commissioner Dicus addressed a plenary session of the group and spoke about the role of the regulator in gaining public confidence. DOE's Secretary Richardson provided the keynote address, and comments were offered to the plenary group by Dr. ElBaradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency and by Dr. Echavarri of the Nuclear Energy Agency. The conference included presentations on the status of repository activities from representatives of the Russian Federation, Sweden, Germany, Japan, Brazil, France, China, and the U.K. There were comments from representatives of the National Resources Defense Council and from the International Association for Environmentally Safe Disposition of Radioactive Materials. Attendees at the conference concluded that international cooperation and collaboration might be useful in future work involving repositories.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
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Second Meeting on Phenomena Identification and Ranking Tables (PIRTs) for High-Burnup Fuel

The second meeting to develop Phenomena Identification and Ranking Tables (PIRTs) was held at NRC on October 27–29. PIRTs have been used at NRC since 1988 and provide a structured way to get a technical understanding that is needed to address certain issues. About twenty of the world's best technical experts are participating in this activity, and the experts represent a balance between industry, universities, and foreign research and regulatory organizations. The current PIRT activity is addressing the postulated PWR rod ejection accident, which is required to be analyzed in plant safety analyses. The third and final PIRT meeting on this accident will be held on December 7–9, and a draft NUREG report describing results of this activity will be available shortly after that meeting. The identification and ranking of phenomena in that report are expected to help the staff make decisions about specific testing requirements and revised criteria that are needed to analyze high-burnup fuel with a variety of current cladding materials for this postulated accident.

Halden Reactor Project Meeting

On November 1 and 2, the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) and the Halden Reactor Project (HRP) co-sponsored a meeting to describe activities and products from the HRP. The NRC has sponsored the HRP since 1958 to perform research in the areas of fuels and materials, human factors and advanced instrumentation and control systems. The HRP currently has 20 member countries, with members from regulatory bodies as well as industry and research organizations. The NRC uses information from Halden to validate fuels and materials computer codes and as the technical bases for licensee review guidance pertaining to human performance and the man-machine interface. EPRI, GE and ABB are other U.S. sponsors. However U.S. nuclear utilities have generally not been aware of the HRP or its products. The intent of this seminar was to familiarize the U.S. nuclear industry with Halden.

Individual utilities, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), a vendor, and a national laboratory were represented, as well as, RES and NRR. The HRP project manager gave an overview of the HRP and a short presentation on their fuels and materials programs. This was followed by a description of their human factors research and how the computerized operator support systems are evaluated using commercial reactor operators in their research simulator. They also gave a detailed description of their Virtual Reality (VR) laboratory and applications in designing control rooms. The specific systems discussed included systems for: alarm handling, signal monitoring and validation, computerized procedures, event detection, reactor core monitoring and thermal performance monitoring, as well as a tool for developing operator interfaces.

The industry representatives expressed great interest and willingness to use or further validate several of these systems. There was particular interest in the use of VR technology to design hybrid control rooms. There is expected follow-up between specific utilities and the HRP. Also EPRI indicated that they will sponsor a future HRP meeting with members of the Digital I&C and

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Human Performance committees. There was greatest interest in those systems that could reduce burden and costs.

Utility and industry representatives at the meeting made it clear that these technologies will be employed in hybrid control room applications at current US plants. Participation in these activities prepares the NRC for future applications of these emerging technologies.

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Incident Response Operations
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Request for assistance involving a transportation incident

Members of IRO, NMSS, OSP and Regions II, III and IV responded under the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP) to a request for assistance involving a transportation incident reported to the NRC Operations Center on October 20, 1999, (event report #36323 and PNO-IV-99-A-046A). A shipment of poly liners (removed from waste casks) was being transported from Allied Technology Group, Inc (ATG) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to an ATG facility in Richland, Washington. When the shipment arrived, contamination in the form of resin beads was identified on the outer surface of several of the liners. The states of Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, Idaho, Wyoming, Oregon, and Washington were notified and participated in coordination conference calls through the NRC Operations Center. The Department of Energy Radiological Assistance Program provided monitoring assistance to the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Other Federal agencies participating on the conference calls were the EPA and DOT. There was some media interest particularly in Washington and Idaho. All states conducted radiation surveys of likely areas where the truck may have stopped and no traces of radiation above background levels were found. All states agreed to suspend search efforts on Saturday, October 23, 1999.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS:

1. PNO-I-99-051, University of Pennsylvania, APPARENT RADIATION OVEREXPOSURE OF THE SKIN RESULTING FROM IODINE-131
2. PNO-II-99-047, Las Piedras Construction Corporation, STOLEN MOISTURE DENSITY GAUGE
3. PNO-IV-99-050, Foree & Vann, Inc. THEFT OF PORTABLE MOISTURE DENSITY GAUGE
4. PNO-IV-99-051, Queens Medical Center, MEDICAL MISADMINISTRATION

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
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Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs and Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance (Part 5)

A common proposed rule, issued by NRC and 23 other Federal agencies, was published in the Federal Register on October 29, 1999 (64 FR 58568). The proposed rule would provide for the enforcement of Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 by the participating agencies. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. The proposed rule would provide guidance to recipients of federal financial assistance who administer education programs or activities. The comment period for this action closes December 28, 1999.

Michael Stein; Receipt of Petition for Rulemaking (PRM-2-12)

A document that requests public comment on a petition for rulemaking submitted by Michael Stein was published in the Federal Register on November 3, 1999 (64 FR 59669). The petitioner believes that NRC regulations pertaining to deliberate misconduct and employee protection do not contain certain needed safeguards. The petitioner requests that NRC amend its deliberate misconduct and employee protection regulations to ensure that all individuals are afforded the right to respond to an NRC determination that the individual has violated these regulations. The comment period on the petition closes January 18, 2000.

Antitrust Review Authority: Clarification (Parts 2 and 50)

A proposed rule that would amend the NRC's regulations to reflect the Commission's limited antitrust review authority more clearly was published in the Federal Register on November 3, 1999 (64 FR 59671). The proposed amendment would explicitly limit the types of applications that must include antitrust information. The comment period on this action closes January 3, 2000.

Clarification and Addition of Flexibility (Part 72)

A proposed rule that would amend the NRC's regulations pertaining to spent fuel storage was published in the Federal Register on November 3, 1999. The proposed rule would specify the provisions of Part 72 that apply to general licensees, specific licensees, applicants for a specific license, certificate holders and applicants for a certificate. The proposed rule would also eliminate the need for repetitious Part 72 specific license hearing reviews of cask design issues that the Commission had previously considered and resolved during the approval of the cask design. The proposed rule would also allow the applicant for a Certificate of Compliance to begin cask fabrication under an NRC-approved quality assurance program before the Certificate of Compliance is issued. The comment period for this action closes January 18, 2000.

Petition for Rulemaking from the State of Nevada; Extension of comment period (PRM-73-10)

A document that extends the public comment period on a petition for rulemaking submitted by the State of Nevada was published in the Federal Register on November 3, 1999 (64 FR 59684). The petitioner requested that the NRC amend its regulations governing safeguards for shipments of spent nuclear fuel against sabotage and terrorism. The petition requested that the NRC conduct a comprehensive assessment of the consequences of specific types of terrorist attacks and modify its regulations accordingly. The comment period for this action has been extended and now closes January 28, 2000.

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Chief Information Officer
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Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the 5-Day Period of
October 29, 1999 through November 4, 1999:

SECY-99-019: Release of Investigative Information from the Office of Investigations Reports to Licensees and Subject of Investigations for Purposes of Predecisional Enforcement Conference. (FOIA/PA 2000-0030)

JCO Co., Tokaimura, Japan, uranium processing plant 9/30/99 incident. (FOIA/PA 2000-0031)

170 W. Providencia, Burbank, CA, all licenses issued to site. (FOIA/PA 2000-0032)

Raytheon Engineers & Constructors, Lyndhurst, NJ, environmental site assessment. (FOIA/PA 2000-0033)

Shiprock site, Shiprock, NM, 1962 AEC inspection report, memos, teletype. (FOIA/PA 2000-0034)

Vista Technologies, San Antonio, TX, license #42-27590-01 application dated 1/13/99. (FOIA/PA 2000-0035)

Individual, asbestos-containing materials at identified sites: Hanford, St. Lucie, So. Texas, & Beaver Valley plants and the Los Alamos Testing Area. (FOIA/PA 2000-0036)

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 5, 1999

Arrivals		
PARKER, Myra	SECRETARY (OA)	HR
WONG, Melanie	PROJECT MANAGER	NMSS
Departures		
DUBOIS, Michelle	SECRETARY (OA)	OCFO

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Office of Public Affairs
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Media Interest

USA Today has inquired about electrical cable issues existing since the 1970s at Brunswick.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
99-234	Note to Editors: ACRS meeting November 18
99-235	NRC Comments on EPA's Proposed Radiation Standards for Yucca Mountain Waste Repository
99-236	Note to Editors: ACRS meeting November 17
99-237	Pilot Program Evaluation Panel to Meet in Rockville, Maryland, November 16-17
99-238	NRC and Utah Choose Pricewaterhouse Cooper as Trustee for Atlas Uranium Mill Tailings Pile
99-239	Commission to Meet With Stakeholders November 9 on Nuclear Materials and Waste Activities
Regions:	
I-99-92	NRC Assigns New Senior Resident Inspector at Ginna Nuclear Plant
I-99-93	NRC Assigns New Resident Inspector at Nine Mile Point
III-99-47	NRC Staff Proposes \$110,000 Fine Against Commonwealth Edison for Discriminating Against Worker Who Raised Safety Issues

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Office of the Secretary
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Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Information Papers		
1: SECY-99-253	10/21/99	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending October 15, 1999

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Pilot Program Evaluation Panel; Meeting Notice for November 16 and 17, 1999.
2. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Subcommittee Meeting on Thermal-Hydraulic Phenomena; Notice of Meeting on November 17, 1999.
3. Northeast Nuclear Energy Company (Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Unit No. 3; Facility Operating License NPF-49); Docket No. 50-423-LA-3; Notice of Prehearing Conference on December 13 and 14, 1999.

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Region I
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FitzPatrick and Indian Point 3

On Tuesday, November 2, 1999, New York Power Authority announced that it is beginning exclusive negotiations with Entergy Nuclear regarding the potential sale of the FitzPatrick and Indian Point 3 plants. Entergy Nuclear officials will be inspecting the plants during the weeks of November 8 and November 15.

R. W. Johnson Pharmaceutical Research Institute Meeting (Springhouse, PA)

A Region I staff member attended a meeting at the R. W. Johnson Pharmaceutical Research Institute (an NRC licensee) on October 20, 1999. The meeting was requested by representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III (Philadelphia) Office, who invited representatives of the EPA Office of Solid Waste, the EPA Office of Reinvention, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP), and the NRC to discuss a research project the licensee has been performing on high-temperature catalytic oxidation of a mixed waste stream. Although research into this process has been performed since 1992, the licensee recently submitted an application to the EPA for this research activity to become part of the EPA's "Project XL". As part of this application, the licensee has requested that the radiolabeled carbon dioxide and water products no longer be considered mixed waste products, but be disposed of as low-level radioactive wastes. The meeting was held to discuss the high-temperature catalytic oxidation process, view the apparatus, and review the options available to the licensee, EPA and PADEP for regulation of this research project and disposal of the mixed waste products.

Health Physics Topical Review

Charles Meinhold, current President of the NCRP, provided a two-day presentation to Region I Health Physicists on Radiation Risk. This Seminar meets the requirements of IMC 1246 for refresher training on a Health Physics Topical Review topic.

Transport of Haddam Neck Steam Domes

During the week of November 1, 1999, two of the four steam domes (the upper portion of the steam generators) were shipped from the Haddam Neck site as part of the decommissioning process. The two domes were transported by road to Portland, CT, and transferred to a rail car for transport to the GTS-Duratek processing facility in Tennessee. The domes contained minimal radioactivity, and did not require special packaging or labeling for radioactive material, but were transported as over-weight and over-size items. Region I inspection activities included evaluating the package and performing independent measurements prior to the shipments leaving the site, and accompanying the shipments to Portland. No radiation above background levels were detected and no problems were identified with the transfers. The licensee notified local elected officials, police and fire departments, and school superintendents, prior to the shipments. The licensee also issued a press release, but media interest was minimal.

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Region II
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Region II Management Retreat

On November 2-3, the Regional Administrator, and all regional managers and supervisors conducted a management retreat in Athens, GA. The retreat discussed the results of self-assessments performed by each Division, actions to improve performance during the next six months, and actions to address Agency program changes scheduled during the next six months. The retreat was attended by the Region II Coordinator from the Office of the Executive Director for Operations.

Radiation Safety Officer's Counterpart Meeting

On November 3-4, the Division of Nuclear Materials Safety hosted the NRC Radiation Safety Officer Counterpart Meeting in the Region II office.

Margaret Federline, Deputy Director for Research, visits Region II office

On November 4, Margaret Federline, Deputy Director in the Office of Regulatory Research visited the Region II office to meet with the managers and senior reactor analysts. Discussion topics included an understanding of how the Office of Regulatory Research programs affect regional operations. She elicited feedback on how the Office and Region can foster communications on issues and what needs the Region might have for research. She was shown the Regional probabilistic library and steps to provide "computer assisted," risk information aids for inspectors.

Southern Nuclear Operating Company - Management Meeting

On November 4, representatives from Southern Nuclear Operating Company attended a management meeting in the Region II office. The meeting discussed the Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation with emphasis on the design, use and testing of the transfer cranes and cradle devices.

Division of Reactor Projects Counterpart Meeting

On November 4, Region II hosted the Division of Reactor Projects counterpart meeting on the Pilot Program Process. The Division Directors met with members of the Inspection Program Branch, NRR, to discuss pilot program implementation issues.

Region III
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Commissioner Merrifield Visits Dresden Nuclear Power Station

Commissioner Jeffrey Merrifield, accompanied by the Regional Administrator, visited the Dresden Nuclear Power Station on November 1, 1999.

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Region IV
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Arkansas Nuclear One License Extension Meeting

On November 4, 1999, members of the Entergy Operations, Inc. (Arkansas Nuclear One) staff met with members of the Region IV staff. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the upcoming submittal for a license extension for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1.

Core Shroud Bolts at Cooper Nuclear Station

On November 2, 1999, while operators were removing core shroud bolts from the spent fuel pool, the cable supporting one of the bolts failed. The licensee had previously stated that a cable clamp had unfastened. The approximately 300 lb. bolt dropped 10 feet and impacted a "Tri-Nuke" brand filter canister, penetrating the canister and damaging at least one of the filters. Operators attempted to retrieve the bolt; however, the canister moved with the bolt and retrieval operations were, therefore, halted. Health physics technicians performing surveys and water analysis did not detect an increase in radioactivity or radiation levels. Licensee personnel also performed a visual inspection of the spent fuel pool liner and found it intact. The licensee has established a team to investigate the root cause of the event and evaluate options for removing the bolt from the canister.

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