

Thompson, John

8/90

**From:** Issa, Alfred *NR*  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 08, 2011 7:40 AM  
**To:** Thorp, John; Frye, Timothy; Thompson, John; Copeland, Douglas; Patel, Jay  
**Cc:** Thomas, Eric; King, Mark; Sigmon, Rebecca  
**Subject:** RE: geo-science OpE

John,

Sorry I did not copy you when I responded to John Thompson but the following are the answers that I gave him:

The responses to your questions are as follows:

Question 1: How is new reactor geo-science OpE screened?

Answer 1: The same as any other OpE, e.g., the North Anna seismic event was screened yesterday during the clearinghouse meeting.

Question 2: How does NRO stay abreast of geo-tech information that might address Mr. Brown's concern regarding the handling of new data from our professional geo-science staff that attend professional conferences, read the magazines/web sites of the professional societies, have peers who share information with them, and generally have access to a lot of information that we would not/might not get from ENs/LERs?

Answer 2: Based on discussions with Mr. Cook, Branch Chief, the NRO Geosciences and Geotechnical Engineering Branches receive new information and data related to their fields regularly. When they do, they disseminate the information to the rest of their staff during their weekly meeting and if the information is significant, they hold technical caucuses that include research, structural branches and other potentially impacted branches to discuss their ramifications and the need to pursue follow-up actions.

At this point in time, there is no mechanism to transmit the information to ConE but we have plans to issue a new IMC to replace IMC 0970 and we will consider adding new requirements as needed. The requirements, if added, will specify high thresholds for notification such as safety significant information that could have generic implications.

Please note that Chris also plans to work on a response to the general GAO question (not including ConE involvement).

Please let me know if you still have questions.

Thank you

AI

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**From:** Thorp, John *NR*  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 06, 2011 12:30 PM  
**To:** Frye, Timothy; Issa, Alfred; Thompson, John; Copeland, Douglas; Patel, Jay  
**Cc:** Thomas, Eric; King, Mark; Sigmon, Rebecca  
**Subject:** RE: geo-science OpE

AI,

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Thanks, please give us the answer, and we'll check with our POC with the GAO auditors.

John

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**From:** Frye, Timothy  
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2011 9:36 AM  
**To:** Issa, Alfred; Thompson, John; Copeland, Douglas; Patel, Jay  
**Cc:** Thorp, John; Thomas, Eric; King, Mark; Sigmon, Rebecca  
**Subject:** RE: geo-science OpE

AI

This is a ConE program question, so you should provide the answer

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**From:** Issa, Alfred  
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2011 9:36 AM  
**To:** Frye, Timothy; Thompson, John; Copeland, Douglas; Patel, Jay  
**Cc:** Thorp, John; Thomas, Eric; King, Mark; Sigmon, Rebecca  
**Subject:** RE: geo-science OpE

I actually started looking for an answer.


John,

Would it be acceptable to give you the write-up myself or would you prefer a geo-science expert to do it?

Thanks

*Alfred Issa, P.E.*  
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*Reactor Operations Engineer*  
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*(301) 415-5342*

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**From:** Frye, Timothy   
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2011 9:33 AM  
**To:** Thompson, John; Issa, Alfred; Copeland, Douglas; Patel, Jay  
**Cc:** Thorp, John; Thomas, Eric; King, Mark; Issa, Alfred; Sigmon, Rebecca  
**Subject:** RE: geo-science OpE

AI

Please see below, and provide a short summary of ConE experience in this area.

Thanks

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**From:** Thompson, John  
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2011 9:21 AM  
**To:** Frye, Timothy  
**Cc:** Thorp, John; Thomas, Eric; King, Mark; Issa, Alfred; Sigmon, Rebecca  
**Subject:** geo-science OpE

Tim,

As part of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) audit of NRC oversight of nuclear reactors' resilience to natural disasters and external events, Fred Brown is asking how we would convey to the GAO that we stay abreast of OpE in the geo-science area (see below). My off-the-cuff sense of Fred's question is that geo-science OpE is screened and brought to the OpE clearinghouse, when warranted. My understanding is that NRO has the greatest concentration of Agency experts in this area (I don't think NRR even has a geo-science branch anymore). Since NRR and NRO are moving to better integrate OpE in our screening activities, I was wondering if someone on your staff could send me a couple of sentences covering how new reactor geo-science OpE is screened and how NRO stays abreast of geo-tech information that might address what Fred is concerned about below.

John Thompson

*John (Thorp),*

*I'm sure that you are all over this (how we identify new information on external events).*

*For my curiosity, how do you plan to convey that we can get new data from our professional geo-science staff that attend professional conferences, read the magazines/web sites of the professional societies, have peers who share information with them, and generally have access to a lot of information that we would not/might not get from ENs/LERs/the licensees via our residents/and your staff's review of nuclear and mass media sources?*

*Thanks,  
Fred*