

10 CFR 50.55a –Time for Change

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NRC Regulatory Information Conference
March 11, 2009



1

10 CFR 50.55a, Codes and Standards

- Background
- Issues/Concerns
- Proposed Solution(s)
- Conclusion



2

Background

- Proposed rule November 25, 1969
- Final Rule issued June 12, 1971
- AEC concern that industry standards were not being implemented in plant design and construction in a timely manner
- 38 revisions (1972-2008)



3

Background

- Have the original objectives been achieved?
- Are plants safe when compliant with specific Addenda/Edition of the ASME Code?
- Section III, XI, O&M, CONAGT, NQA, QME, Cranes, PRA Technical Adequacy,...
- Editions issued approx. every 3 years
- Addenda issued annually
- Code Cases
- Public Law 104-113
- OMB Circular A-119
- NRC Management Directive 6.5
- SECY 00-0100 and 08-0140



4

Issues/Concerns

- Rulemaking every 2-3 years
 - Regulatory Guides incorporated into the regulation
- Processes
 - Proposed alternatives 50.55a (a)(3)
 - Relief requests
 - Exemptions
 - 10 year ISI updates
 - Code Cases
- Resources
 - NRC, licensees and vendors



5

Issues/Concerns

- Enhancements in plant safety
- SDO consensus process
- Cost/benefit
- Imposition of new regulatory positions
 - Limitations and exceptions
- Regulatory stability and uncertainty



6

Proposed Solution – Back to Basics

- Reduce the volume
- Plain English
- Eliminate unnecessary content
 - The what?
 - The when?
 - The why?
 - The how?



7

Proposed Solution – Back to Basics

- Principles of Good Regulation
 - Independence
 - Openness
 - Efficiency
 - Clarity
 - Reliability



8

Proposed Solution(s)

- Straight up endorsement
 - Approx. 60 NRC Staff actively involved in ASME committees
 - Exceptions/limitations only if conflict with existing regulations
- Apply 10 CFR 50.59 and 50.71(e)
 - Control plant licensing and design bases
 - Detailed information of plant Code of Record to be incorporated into licensee controlled document



9

Proposed Solution(s)

- Both allow NRC to maintain oversight
 - Inspection
 - Enforcement
- Both will ensure ASME Code remains central to design, operation and maintenance



10

Conclusion

- Now is the time
 - Unnecessary regulatory burden
 - Marginal safety benefit
- Plant safety has been demonstrated
- Is it serving the purpose for which it was originally intended?
- Improve the process once and for all



11
