



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

June 16, 2008

SECRETARY

COMMISSION VOTING RECORD

DECISION ITEM: SECY-08-0056

TITLE: ESTIMATED COSTS FOR BROADCASTING PUBLIC MEETINGS OVER THE INTERNET (WEBSTREAMING)

The Commission (with Chairman Klein and Commissioners Lyons and Svinicki agreeing) approved Option 2 of the subject paper as recorded in the Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM) of June 16, 2008. Commissioner Jaczko approved Option 1.

This Record contains a summary of voting on this matter together with the individual vote sheets, views and comments of the Commission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Annette L. Vietti-Cook", written over a horizontal line.

Annette L. Vietti-Cook
Secretary of the Commission

Attachments:

1. Voting Summary
2. Commissioner Vote Sheets

cc: Chairman Klein
Commissioner Jaczko
Commissioner Lyons
Commissioner Svinicki
OGC
EDO
PDR

VOTING SUMMARY - SECY-08-0056

RECORDED VOTES

	APRVD	DISAPRVD	ABSTAIN	NOT PARTICIP	COMMENTS	DATE
CHRM. KLEIN	X				X	5/28/08
COMR. JACZKO	X				X	5/6/08
COMR. LYONS	X				X	5/29/08
COMR. SVINICKI	X				X	6/2/08

COMMENT RESOLUTION

In their vote sheets, Chairman Klein and Commissioners Lyons and Svinicki approved Option 2 and provided some additional comments. Commissioner Jaczko approved Option 1 and provided some additional comments. Subsequently, the comments of the Commission were incorporated into the guidance to staff as reflected in the SRM issued on June 16, 2008.

NOTATION VOTE

RESPONSE SHEET

TO: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary
FROM: CHAIRMAN KLEIN
SUBJECT: SECY-08-0056 – ESTIMATED COSTS FOR
BROADCASTING PUBLIC MEETINGS OVER THE
INTERNET (WEB STREAMING)

Approved X Disapproved Abstain

Not Participating

COMMENTS: Below Attached X None



SIGNATURE

5/28/08

DATE

Entered on "STARS" Yes No

CHAIRMAN KLEIN'S COMMENTS ON SECY-08-0056

I approve providing the necessary equipment and staff resources to web stream meetings in two additional conference rooms in the White Flint Complex and the auditorium in White Flint North (Option 2). I believe that moving forward on a smaller scale than the staff recommended (Option 1) will still expand the NRC's capacity for web streaming and allow for additional review of the public interest and the equipment that would be appropriate to meet the demand. The lessons we learn from expanding the headquarters web streaming capability, in conjunction with the one-year pilot program to web stream the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (Panel) meetings from remote locations will provide valuable input to help the Commission determine how to best implement a web streaming program for the Regions.

I continue to believe that web streaming can be a means to increasing transparency of the NRC's public meetings, provided it can be demonstrated to be cost effective. Unfortunately, a compelling reason to outfit the Regions with equipment for conference rooms (one in each Region) and six portable web stream kits is not evident. As an indicator of public interest, it would have been useful for staff to compile and present the number of external hits the NRC experienced for the Commission meetings that were webcasted. Historically, each Region held less than 20 meetings. However, it is not clear how many of these meetings met the definition of "significant public interest", which would have been the basis for projecting the demand.

In addition, I am reluctant to approve moving forward with providing portable web stream kits to the Regions without having the results of the Panel's one-year pilot program. Under this pilot program, six public meetings for adjudicatory proceedings are to be web streamed from remote locations other than the Panel's Rockville and Las Vegas hearing facilities to gain a better understanding of the costs and the technical issues associated with web streaming in remote locations. Given the significant upfront and recurring cost expenditures, I believe that expanding our capabilities at Headquarters should increase the transparency of NRC's public meetings and provide the opportunity to assess further the benefits of expanding the capability.

Commissioner Jaczko's vote on this matter proposed to begin the expanded web streaming effort in FY 2008 with funds available, including the funding available for the 18th floor renovation. I support providing additional funds in FY 2008 to implement Option 2. However, I believe a Commission decision to move forward on web streaming in FY 2008 should be made solely on the merits of the initiative, and should remain separate from a decision on whether to renovate the 18th floor conference area.


Dale E. Klein 5/28/08

NOTATION VOTE

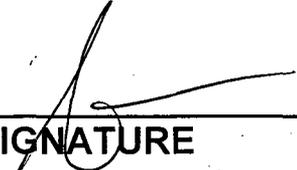
RESPONSE SHEET

TO: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary
FROM: COMMISSIONER JACZKO
SUBJECT: SECY-08-0056 – ESTIMATED COSTS FOR
BROADCASTING PUBLIC MEETINGS OVER THE
INTERNET (WEB STREAMING)

Approved X Disapproved Abstain

Not Participating

COMMENTS: Below Attached X None



SIGNATURE

8/6/07

DATE

Entered on "STARS" Yes No

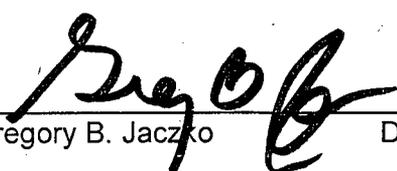
**Commissioner Jaczko's Comments on SECY-08-0056
Estimated Costs for Broadcasting Public Meetings Over the Internet
(Web Streaming)**

I approve of the staff's recommendation outlined in option 1 for increasing the agency's capability to web stream public meetings of significant public interest over the Internet. As I mentioned in a memorandum to my fellow Commissioners last November, the reality of today's world is that not everyone interested in a topic is able to attend the meetings or listen via conferencing. Fortunately, technology such as web streaming makes it possible for a public agency – and one with a long record of conducting business as transparently as possible – to do even more to enhance the ability of interested stakeholders to stay engaged and follow the agency's progress on issues.

In order to implement this effort, staff has proposed a definition that would be used to determine what meetings merit web streaming. The staff's definition is a good starting point, but I am concerned that the proposed definition of a meeting with "significant public interest" may not include all meetings about issues of generic applicability that might be worthwhile to web stream. One example is meetings on rulemaking efforts. Depending upon the nature of the rulemaking, these meetings may not otherwise fall within the proposed definition's parameters. But rulemakings are significant agency activities, and we achieve our greatest success on developing a good rulemaking package when we hear from a wide variety of stakeholders. Web streaming these meetings can strengthen our public outreach thereby encouraging broader participation, and ultimately a better final rule. Thus, I believe the definition should be expanded to include meetings on generic activities such as rulemakings. Additionally, after the staff has some implementation experience with the definition of a meeting with "significant public interest", the staff should review the definition, and the types of meetings that were not captured by it, and determine if changes to the definition are needed.

Regarding the funding for Option 1, the staff proposes to include the initial first year expenses, including equipment costs, of \$979,300 and 2 FTE in the budget for FY 10. I believe that, instead, the agency should begin the web streaming effort with available funds in FY 08. A majority of these first-year costs could easily be covered by using the \$630,000 available from the FY 08 budget for the 18th floor renovation in the Headquarters One White Flint North building. (This amount does not include the \$80,000 allocated for the video-conferencing equipment for the 18th floor. Those funds would remain available in the FY 08 budget.) The remaining \$349,300 and 2 FTE could be taken from the additional funds that will be made available upon staff's ongoing efforts to review the implementation of the agency's FY 08 funding.

The agency currently has the funding to implement this program, and certainly has the external stakeholder interest in making the program worthwhile. Thus, I support the staff's recommendation to pursue option 1 and support moving forward expeditiously with FY 08 available funds to begin this effort.


Gregory B. Jaczko

Date

5/6/08

NOTATION VOTE

RESPONSE SHEET

TO: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary
FROM: COMMISSIONER LYONS
SUBJECT: SECY-08-0056 – ESTIMATED COSTS FOR
BROADCASTING PUBLIC MEETINGS OVER THE
INTERNET (WEB STREAMING)

Approved X Disapproved Abstain

Not Participating

COMMENTS: Below Attached X None



Peter B. Lyons
SIGNATURE

5/ 29/08
DATE

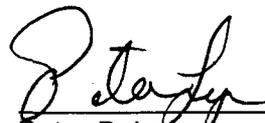
Entered on "STARS" Yes X No

Commissioner Lyons' Comments on SECY-08-0056

I approve Option 2 in SECY-08-0056 which will provide the necessary equipment and staff resources to web stream meetings in two additional conference rooms in the White Flint Complex and the auditorium in White Flint North. I would prefer to approve Option 1 which is most responsive to the Commission's request to staff to provide a cost estimate for implementing web streaming technology for "every public meeting where the staff anticipates public interest unless feasibility constraints prevent them from doing so." I agree with Commissioner Jaczko's assessment that not everyone who is interested in the NRC's activities is able to attend meetings or listen via conferencing; thus, webstreaming should greatly "enhance the ability of interested stakeholders to stay engaged and follow the agency's progress on issues." However, at this time there is not enough information available to support the efficacy of Option 1 which involves a larger expenditure of agency resources.

I also believe that the staff's definition of a meeting "with significant public interest" may not be broad enough to cover, as Commissioner Jaczko noted, meetings addressing issues of generic applicability that might be worthwhile to web stream, e.g., interagency/agreement state working groups examining jurisdictional issues, rulemaking efforts, etc. I support the staff's proposal to create a team with representatives from OCA, OPA, and OEDO which would consider specific criteria for determining which meetings should be webstreamed. In that vein, I agree with Commissioner Jaczko's comment that after the staff has some implementation experience with the definition of a meeting with "significant public interest," the staff should review the definition, and the types of meetings that were not captured by it, and determine if changes to the definition are needed.

The staff should assess the data it gathers addressing public interest in the meetings that are web streamed under Option 2 and use this information to support additional recommendations to the Commission as to whether we need to increase or decrease agency resources and expand web streaming as envisioned in Option 1.


Peter B. Lyons 5/29/08
Date

NOTATION VOTE

RESPONSE SHEET

TO: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary
FROM: COMMISSIONER SVINICKI
SUBJECT: SECY-08-0056 – ESTIMATED COSTS FOR
BROADCASTING PUBLIC MEETINGS OVER THE
INTERNET (WEB STREAMING)

Approved X Disapproved Abstain

Not Participating

COMMENTS: Below Attached X None



SIGNATURE

06/ 2 /08

DATE

Entered on "STARS" Yes No

**Commissioner Svinicki's Comments on SECY-08-0056
Estimated Costs for Broadcasting Public Meetings Over the Internet
(Web Streaming)**

I approve of option 2 in SECY-08-0056 which will insert into the budget process for fiscal year 2010 (now in development) the acquisition of video teleconferencing equipment and information technology support for two additional conference rooms in the White Flint Complex and the auditorium in White Flint North for the purposes of increased web streaming. I also believe that staff should report back to the Commission with a broader evaluation of how this expansion will be harmonized with existing communications policies and directives, as well as providing data on NRC web streaming experiences to date. This information should be provided to the Commission in the spring of 2009 so that the Commission's consideration of the FY 2011 budget, and adjustments to the FY 2010 budget, will be informed by the staff's analysis.

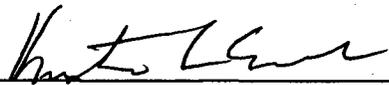
My vote should not be read to suggest that I disfavor the more expansive web streaming options provided by staff in the paper. I support the idea of increasing the agency's web streaming capabilities as one way to augment openness. Without more data and evaluation, however, I find myself skeptical that the NRC can embark upon what would amount to an immediate quintupling of current agency web streaming (under the most expansive proposal) without a more gradual buildup to grow our capabilities in this area. I recognize that through the December 3, 2007 SRM, staff was directed solely to provide a cost estimate for increased web streaming. They have done so. However, I'm left wondering whether we've asked enough questions – or the right ones – about the underpinnings of this web streaming proposal, particularly its interplay with existing NRC public meeting policies.

Current Commission policy on enhancing public policy speaks in terms of "categories" of public meetings. Depending on the level of public interest in the activity being discussed, NRC policy permits a meeting to be changed from Category 1 (public observation) to Categories 2 or 3 (varying degrees of feedback from the public). Staff should review the number of times an NRC meeting has changed from Category 1 to Categories 2 or 3, since that would likely provide some correlation of the extent to which there is significant public interest in web streamed meetings. Because web streaming provides only a one-way communication, staff should also evaluate how increased reliance on web streaming could impact the agency's objective for Category 2 and 3 meetings, which is to solicit a dialogue with the public. (See, e.g., Enhancing Public Participation in NRC Meetings; Policy Statement, 67 Fed. Reg. 36920, May 28, 2002.)

Current Commission policy also allows stakeholders to request teleconferencing and videoconferencing when traveling to a meeting is difficult for them. While not a perfect surrogate, the number of these requests in the past 2-3 years would at least provide a reasonable estimate of public meetings with "significant public interest." Additionally, any available data regarding current public interest in the meetings already webcast (*i.e.*, web "hits") would be a useful barometer to measure recent "significant public interest."

I also believe that a more detailed evaluation of the infrastructure costs associated with installation of video teleconferencing (VTC) capabilities in additional NRC meeting spaces would be informative. Once underway, these projects are rarely as simple as predicted. For instance, the potential installation of VTC equipment in the One White Flint North 18th floor conference room will require, as I understand it, a complete lighting upgrade for the room. Further, in a building where telecommunications wiring cannot support message lights or caller ID on employee telephones, it is hard to imagine that wiring upgrades to support the increased VTC bandwidth would not also be necessary. If so, these costs should also be provided as part of the staff's evaluation.

Adopting a "crawl, then walk, then run" approach to enhanced and increased web streaming opportunities would likely result in a smoother, and less frustrating, experience for agency stakeholders and web users and would allow time to harmonize current policies and practices with the proposed expansion. Thus, I believe that staff should come back to the Commission, according to the schedule described above, with a more detailed look at the possible expansion of web streaming agency meetings structured in phases. In addition to the data requested above, this detailed look should also include an examination of current Commission policy statements regarding enhancing public participation and should map any expansion of web streaming to the current meeting categories laid out in NRC policy and management directives.



Kristine L. Svinicki 6/ 2/08