

January 15, 1998

For: The Commissioners
 From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
 Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING JANUARY 9, 1998

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*No input this week

James L. Blaha
 Assistant for Operations, OEDO

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ENCLOSURE A

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending January 9, 1998

DPV on the NRC Operator Licensing Examination Process

An NRR DPV Review Panel reviewed a Differing Professional View (DPV) submitted regarding an Operator Licensing Branch (HOLB) decision to disallow the region the opportunity to develop and provide the sample plan used for development of the initial operator licensing examinations at reactor facilities. The operator licensing initial examination process is undergoing major changes concerning who will develop and administer the NRC initial examination. The proposed change to [10 CFR Part 55](#), that was published for public comment in August 1997, requires that the licensee develop initial examinations in accordance with NUREG-1021, Interim Revision 8 of the Examiner Standards. In this process the licensee develops the examination with final approval of the NRC. The concern raised in the DPV was the possibility that a licensee could skew an examination sample plan such that the knowledge, skills and abilities are not systematically covered. The written examination sample plan lists the required knowledge topics or subject areas to be tested. NUREG-1021 Appendix A states that when samples are not chosen systematically, the sample is biased and validity is reduced. This may

allow a licensee to eliminate examination questions in areas that were not adequately covered in their training program and they may not sample the 10 CFR Part 55 topics properly to make a licensing decision. In a recent report on interaction (ROI), Region II requested that HOLB allow the regions to develop and provide the sample plan to the licensee. In HOLB's reply to the ROI, they stated that the regions are not authorized to generate examination outlines for facility use, nor does HOLB plan to amend the pilot process to allow or require regions to prepare examination outlines for anything other than NRC-prepared examinations.

The NRR DPV Review Panel concluded that this was an example of a vulnerability in allowing the licensee to develop the sample plan that needs to be addressed, however they did not agree that the only solution was to have the regions develop the sample plan. The panel recommended that the staff provide further guidance in the examiner standards to ensure that licensees have followed a uniform systematic process for examination question selection and that exams have been prepared in an unbiased manner. The panel also recommended the staff consider issuing an Information Notice to alert licensees and a report on interaction to alert regional staff to the expectation that the process for developing an examination sample plan shall be scrutable, systematic and consistent with the requirements to ensure exam validity. The appropriate organizations in NRR have been tasked with completing the panel's recommended action items within scheduled due dates.

Suppression Pool Bypass and SGTS Failure Through Containment Purge Valves

This year, approximately a dozen Boiling Water Reactor (BWR) sites have reported the potential for bypassing the suppression pool and/or damaging the Standby Gas Treatment System (SGTS) if a Loss-of-Coolant Accident (LOCA) occurs while purging the containment.

Simultaneous purging of the drywell and wetwell while inserting the containment during startup, or de-inserting during shutdown, combined with a single electrical failure which leaves two purge valves open during a LOCA, could open a path from the drywell to the wetwell air space, allowing steam to bypass the suppression pool. In many cases, this could over pressurize the containment (wetwell).

Also, purge flow is usually directed through the SGTS. If large (approximately 18-24 inch) purge valves are being used, as during inserting and de-inserting, the initial surge of air and steam into the SGTS from a LOCA could over pressurize and rupture the low-pressure SGTS ductwork downstream of the purge valves before the valves close, potentially disabling the SGTS and, consequently, the secondary containment function.

Generally, both of these are low-probability events because of the limited amount of time that these operations are conducted (usually during startup and shutdown of the reactor). Also, the second event is addressed by the SRP and in many plants SERs and licensing bases. Further, the suppression pool bypass event may exceed containment design pressure, but probably not the containment's ultimate capacity, which may be 2 to 3 times the design pressure.

General Electric has notified all affected plants about the suppression pool bypass problem. For both problems, plants are taking short-term corrective actions, generally procedural changes to avoid purging in vulnerable configurations, and are pursuing long-term fixes, such as re-analysis and plant modifications.

The staff is preparing an Information Notice to alert licensees to these problems. This is being done to close TAC No. M98125 issued by PECB to evaluate this generic concern.

NRC/ASME/NB Coordinating Committee Meeting

On December 18, 1997, representatives from NRR and RES participated in the semi-annual meeting between NRC, ASME senior staff, and the National Board. The principal focus of this committee meeting is policy issues of mutual interest to ASME and NRC. Items of interest include:

- The committee reviewed the progress of the ASME Special Working Group (SWG) on Seismic Design that is examining the 1995 Code piping design rules that have been found unacceptable by the staff. NRC advised the Coordinating Committee that, since the technical insights developed by the NRC contractor have been provided to the SWG and the SWG is considering proposed approaches to changing the piping design rules, our liaison activities with the SWG will be reduced and we will continue our interaction via our representatives to the standing code committees.
- The recent [10 CFR 50.55a](#) proposed rulemaking that was issued for public comment on December 3, was discussed. The ASME plans to coordinate comments from their committees and provide them to the NRC.
- ASME continues to remain interested in activities to speed NRC rulemaking and their actions to improve the consensus process. DSI-13 was discussed and RES summarized our activities in this area. ASME expressed interest in the 1998 stakeholder meetings.
- ASME work on the risk management initiative was discussed. The proposed scope of a new standard is being considered by the Board on Nuclear Codes and Standards. A task group (chaired by R. Simard of NEI and including M. Drouin as the NRC representative) will be preparing this standard. It is expected to be circulated outside of ASME to other consensus bodies during the development process. Target completion date is December 1998.
- ASME actions to deal with fatigue and transient monitoring were discussed. This activity, being conducted by a task group composed of members from Section III and Section XI, is still defining the scope of the issue and the limitations of the existing code language. NRC encouraged continued effort by this group, as the issue was raised over 2 years ago.
- Threaded fasteners were discussed, including the need for revision to code language. A proposed change to Section III will be sent to the ASME for referral to the Subcommittee on Nuclear Power.

- Other discussion items included steam generator issues, risk-informed initiatives, reactor vessel issues, procurement of replacement components, ASME international activities, and GL 96-06 status.

Nine Mile Point, Unit 2

On January 7, 1998, the licensee requested enforcement discretion to preclude shutdown of Unit 2 with both divisions of the reactor coolant system leakage detection system temporarily inoperable. The Division 2 monitoring channel exhibited erratic behavior and was declared inoperable at 4:30 a.m. January 7, 1998, during a time when Division 1 was out for servicing. Both failures were attributed to moisture in the sensing lines. Without the ability to detect particulate or gaseous radioactivity in the drywell by normal means, the licensee determined that Unit 2 was in a TS 3.0.3 condition, which would require the plant to begin an orderly shutdown by 11:30 a.m. The licensee is monitoring drywell activity every 12 hours based on grab samples. The licensee noted that the Improved TSs (the conversion submittal is expected during the first half of 1998) would not require shutdown, but would require filing a report within 30 days. The licensee requested an extension of time, until 9:00 a.m. January 8, 1998, to restore the containment monitoring system to service without shutting down. A Notice of Enforcement Discretion was granted by Region I with NRR concurrence.

Beaver Valley Power Station, Units 1 and 2

Both Beaver Valley reactors are currently in cold shutdown. Unit 1 is in day 101 of a planned refueling outage (original schedule 40 days). Unit 1 returned to cold shutdown from hot standby over the past weekend due to the discovery of item 3 below. Three primary issues require resolution prior to Unit 1 restart as follows:

- (1) Complete operational turnover of a design change which installed an upgraded CE Rod Position Indication system during the refueling outage.
- (2) DBA control room habitability dose calculations in support of current TS were non-bounding. Complete 10 CFR 50.59 safety evaluation for a UFSAR revision which will place more restrictive limits on faulted SG leakage which is the major contributor to control room dose for the limiting accident.
- (3) Resolve a potential 1EEE-384 Class 1E/non-class 1E separation issue regarding components located in the secondary process racks which provide safety- and non-safety related functions. This principally involves Westinghouse 7100 series logic modules.

Unit 2 performed a TS-required shutdown on December 16, 1997, due to the control room emergency ventilation system not meeting single failure design criteria. Two primary issues require resolution prior to Unit 2 restart as follow:

- (1) Complete several safety evaluations and associated design changes as necessary to satisfy single failure criteria for the control room emergency ventilation system.
- (2) Same as item (3) for Unit 1 above, but principally involves Westinghouse 7300 logic series cards.

The resident staff and a Region I-based engineering inspection team are on site monitoring licensee activities.

Limerick Generating Station, Units 1 and 2

On January 5, 1998, PECO issued a news release announcing that PECO Nuclear, a unit of PECO Energy Company, has been selected by Illinois Power Company (IPC) to manage IPC's Clinton Power Station in Clinton, IL, on a contract basis, effective January 5, 1998.

The initial contract is expected to be for three years, with option for renewal. It will involve a PECO Nuclear management team, headed by Walter G. MacFarland, current vice president of PECO Energy's Limerick Generating Station, who will be chief nuclear officer at Clinton, reporting directly to IPC Chairman Larry D. Haab. Mr. Haab stated that although the PECO Nuclear team will manage the plant, IPC will continue to own the facility and maintain the license for its operation.

The 950 megawatt boiling water reactor has been shut down for a variety of operational and maintenance problems since September 1996.

Wolf Creek

On January 6, 1998, Senator Brownback of Kansas visited Wolf Creek Nuclear Generating Station. There was no NRC involvement in the visit. According to the licensee, the Senator was interested in high-level waste issues and requested a tour of the spent fuel pool area, and discussed with the licensee the proposed low-level waste compact with the state of Nebraska.

ENCLOSURE B

Disposition of Department of Energy Owned Fissile Materials

Staff from the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards received a request from the Department of Energy (DOE [EXIT](#)) for assistance in confirming the quantity of uranium-233 that DOE believes is located at five Nuclear Regulatory Commission licensee sites. Uranium-233 is one of the nuclear materials that DOE has identified for long-term stabilization and ultimate disposition pursuant to the directive from the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, and DOE is in the process of formulating a plan to accomplish these objectives. Staff agreed to contact the identified licensees to confirm the DOE data.

Meeting with Guard Union at Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant

On January 6, 1998, the Director of the Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards, along with representatives from the Division of Facilities and Security and Region III, represented the Nuclear Regulatory Commission at a meeting with the United Plant Guard Workers of America Local 66.

The meeting also included representatives of the Department of Energy from Headquarters, Oak Ridge and the Portsmouth site, the U.S. Enrichment Corporation, Lockheed Martin Energy Services, and Lockheed Martin Utility Services. The collective group addressed protective force concerns and jurisdictional questions.

Holtec HI-STAR 100 Drop Test at Oak Ridge National Laboratory

On December 30, 1997, staff from the Spent Fuel Project Office went to Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, to observe a 1/4-scale, 30-foot drop test for the Holtec HI-STAR 100 dual purpose cask. During a previous drop test performed on December 11, 1997, with the "side-drop" or horizontal orientation, the bolts attaching the bottom impact limiter to the cask failed, allowing the impact limiter to separate from the cask. Holtec subsequently modified the bottom impact limiter design. In the latest 30-foot drop test, with the "slap-down" orientation, the cask was released 15 degrees from horizontal, with the top striking the ground first. This orientation subjected the bottom impact limiter to greater deceleration than the top impact limiter.

Preliminary observations from the drop test indicate that the bolts on the bottom impact limiter remained intact, and the impact limiter did not separate from the cask. Additional test details will be available from Holtec in the near future.

Closure of Nuclear Regulatory Commission Bulletin 96-04, "Chemical, Galvanic, or Other Reactions in Spent Fuel Storage and Transportation Casks"

On December 29, 1997, the Spent Fuel Project Office (SFPO) closed out Nuclear Regulatory Commission Bulletin 96-04. The bulletin was issued on July 5, 1996, following a hydrogen gas ignition event at the Point Beach Nuclear Plant during the loading of a VSC-24 cask. The hydrogen was generated by a chemical reaction between the cask's zinc-based coating and the borated spent fuel pool water. The bulletin was issued to confirm that this type of reaction was not a concern for other spent fuel storage and transportation cask designs. The SFPO staff, with assistance from the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, reviewed 40 responses to the bulletin. These responses addressed 28 different cask designs. Based on the responses, the potential for adverse reactions was identified for three of the 28 cask designs. The staff is taking follow-up actions for these three cask designs.

ENCLOSURE C

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

Fuel Behavior

A special issue on reactivity accidents with high-burnup fuel has been published in the *Nuclear Safety* journal. In late 1993, a test with a high-burnup fuel rod in a French test reactor (CABRI) failed under conditions far below those used in regulation for reactivity accidents. That test led to [Information Notice 94-64](#) and a hold on approving further burnup extensions in NRC-licensed plants. Subsequently, RES made formal arrangements to obtain data from the CABRI test reactor, the NSRR test reactor (Japan), and the IGR test reactor (Russia) and conducted numerous technical discussions on reactivity accidents with EPRI. In 1996, RES made arrangements for a special issue of the *Nuclear Safety* journal to present five papers on research results and assessments prepared by principal investigators from these programs (CABRI, NSRR, IGR, EPRI, and RES), and that special issue has just been published. The papers from France, Japan, and Russia summarize recent results from their test reactor programs and provide interpretation of those results. The EPRI paper presents an assessment of the test data based largely on computer code calculations. The RES paper presents a more empirical assessment of the test data and provides the basis for recently proposed interim criteria for analysis of reactivity accidents with high-burnup fuel. The NRC is considering the adoption of interim licensing criteria and is planning to support additional work in the French and Japanese test reactors.

Reactor Pressure Vessel Lower Head Failure Experiments at Sandia National Laboratories

The lower head of the reactor pressure vessel (RPV) can be subject to significant thermal and pressure loads in the late phases of core melting during a severe accident. An understanding of the mode, timing, and size of lower head failure is important in the evaluation of the consequences of a severe accident because it defines the initial conditions for many of the subsequent challenges to containment integrity. Lower head failure (LHF) tests are being conducted at the Sandia National Laboratories (SNL). The 7th test (LHF-7) was conducted successfully at the SNL on December 19, 1997. The purpose of this test was to examine the effect of lower pressure on creep rupture failure of a reactor pressure vessel. In this test (which was conducted

at 725 psig versus previous tests at 1450 psig) the failure occurred at approximately 1200K (17000 F) as compared to about 1050K (14300 F) for previous higher pressure tests (i.e., 2700 F higher than those observed in previous tests). The failure also produced a smaller hole in the RPV than previous higher pressure tests. Such results need to be considered in assessing accident management strategies related to reactor coolant system pressure. Data from these experiments will be used to assess and validate analytical models of RPV lower head failure.

Regulatory Guides Issued Recently

Draft Regulatory Guide DG-5008 (Proposed Revision 2 of Regulatory Guide 5.62), "Reporting of Safeguards Events"

Draft Regulatory Guide DG-1071, "Standard Format and Content for Post-Shutdown Decommissioning Activities Report" **INSERT TEXT HERE**

ENCLOSURE D

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

Engineering Evaluation, AEOD/E97-03, "Nuclear Power Plant Cold Weather Problems and Protective Measures"

A significant Accident Sequence Precursor (with a conditional core damage probability of 2 E-4) occurred at the Wolf Creek Generating Station on January 30, 1996. It involved icing of cooling water intake trash racks and traveling screens, subsequent loss of an essential service water system train and an auxiliary feedwater pump, and other plant complications. This event led AEOD to evaluate the extent of cold weather related problems at other nuclear power plants over the past 6 years. A search of nuclear power plant operating experience from January 1991 through April 1997 identified events involving ice, freezing, and low ambient temperature conditions affecting intake structures; process lines; instrument lines; emergency diesel generators; essential chillers; electrical systems; and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. This report describes 37 such events at 23 different sites. All other cold weather events except at Wolf Creek were not found to be quantitatively risk significant. Nevertheless many of the events were preventable. Ice formed in a diesel generator service water pump column. Frazil ice formed in the cooling water intakes of three plants. A common safety injection recirculation line froze making the system inoperable. Refueling water and condensate storage tanks' level transmitter lines with inadequate insulation or heat tracing froze. Emergency diesel generators became inoperable because of oil and grease viscosity problems. Inadequately sealed electrical conduit and cabinets caused partial losses of onsite or offsite power. Lack of design oversight, incomplete review of operating experience, and insufficient attention to cold weather preparations caused most of these events. Most importantly, the report identifies preventive and corrective actions licensees have taken to protect against cold weather operational events.

Primary Coolant System Leak Study

On December 18, 1997, AEOD distributed a draft of the Assessment of Pressurized Water Reactor (PWR) Primary System Leaks report to other NRC offices and industry for peer review. This study provides a comprehensive assessment of U.S. experience related to PWR primary system leaks, their rates, and trends; the safety significance of such leakages; and assessment of current leak detection methods.

The assessment was based on a review of licensee event reports related to leak events from January 1985 to September 1996, visits to PWR plants, and reviews of related licensee failure analyses and technical literature. The report presents findings in the following seven areas: (1) trends of annual rates of primary coolant leaks, (2) degradation mechanisms and failure modes that have caused primary coolant leaks, (3) locations and types of leaks, (4) leaks that have a potential for relatively rapid growth, (5) safety significance of piping fatigue, (6) leak events that may be regarded as core damage precursors, and (7) effectiveness of current leakage detection systems.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATIONS

1. NO-II-97-065, Duke Power Co. (Oconee 1), STEAM GENERATOR (SG) 1A TUBE LEAK
2. NO-II-97-065A, Duke Power Co., (Oconee 1), STEAM GENERATOR (SG) 1A TUBE LEAK - UPDATE
3. NO-II-98-001, Professional Services Incorporated, STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE
4. NO-III-98-001, Health system Minnesota, REPORT OF A POTENTIAL BRACHYTHERAPY MISADMINISTRATION
5. NO-III-98-0002, Illinois Power Co. (Clinton 1), PECO ENERGY TO PROVIDE MANAGEMENT SERVICES AT CLINTON
6. NO-III-98-003, Michael Reese Hospital, BRACHYTHERAPY MISADMINISTRATION (UNDERDOSE)

ENCLOSURE F

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

OWFN Restack

The 16th floor of the Restack project has been completed. The occupants of the floor: EDO staff, SECY, OCA staff and the Director, OIP were moved onto the floor beginning January 8, 1998. The 5th floor is the next Restack floor and that work will begin on Monday, January 12, 1998 and will be completed March 20, 1998.

Contract Performance

The Center Review Group completed its assessment of the contractor's performance under contract NRC-02-93-005, "Operation of the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses," for the sixteenth performance evaluation period (September 29, 1996 through September 26, 1997). Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) received an excellent rating (95%). The total award fee to be awarded to SwRI, for contract performance during this period is \$528,899.

ENCLOSURE G

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests Received during the 4-Day Period of January 2, 1998 - January 8, 1998:

Unclaimed monies \$100 and over, printed list on disk.	(FOIA/PA-98-001)
Zion plant violations between 5/97 and 7/97, and OI report 3-97-019.	(FOIA/PA-98-002)
OIG report 97-40G with exhibits.	(FOIA/PA-98-003)
ABWR design control document on CD-Rom.	(FOIA/PA-98-004)
Labor arbitration and bargaining unit representatives listing.	(FOIA/PA-98-005)
Palo Verde, OI allegation reports.	(FOIA/PA-98-006)
Tennessee Valley Authority, OI report 2-93-70.	(FOIA/PA-98-007)
By-product licensees on disk.	(FOIA/PA-98-008)
Maine Yankee, conflict of interest under NRC-03-93-026 contract.	(FOIA/PA-98-009)
Braidwood station investigation involving named individual.	(FOIA/PA-98-010)

ENCLOSURE I

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

Arrivals

ALTER, Peter	Reactor Engineer	RIV
GARRETT, Norm	Resident Inspector	RIV
STEWART, Belinda	Secretary (OA)	RIV
ZELAC, Ronald	Health Physicist	NMSS

Retirements

WAGNER, William	Reactor Engineer	RIV
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Departures

MILANS, Greg	Clerk	CIO
SCHWENK, George	Senior Reactor Engineer	NRR

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

Media Interest

Newsweek magazine is planning a story on ocean dumping of nuclear waste.

The St. Petersburg Times is planning a story on the Crystal River restart.

Three reporters attended Chairman Jackson's press conference with the International Nuclear Regulators Association in Walnut Creek.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
98-1	NRC Issues License to Hydro Resources for Uranium Mining Project in New Mexico
98-2	NRC Proposes \$13,750 Fine Against Westinghouse
98-3	NRC Licensing Board to Hold Prehearing Conference on Proposed Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage Facility in Utah
98-4	NRC Broadens the Scope of its Deliberate Misconduct Rule
Regions:	
I-98-1	NRC Staff Finds Decline in Two Areas of Performance in Latest Evaluation of Nine Mile Point Nuclear Power Plants
I-98-2	NRC Proposes to Fine Duquesne Light Company \$55,000 for Violation at Beaver Valley Involving Emergency Cooling System
I-98-3	NRC, Northeast Utilities to Discuss Apparent Violations; Six Other Meetings Also Scheduled Regarding Millstone
II-98-1	NRC Conference Scheduled With TVA on Radiation Exposure at Watts Bar
II-98-2	NRC Schedules Conference in Puerto Rico on Radiation Safety at Hospital Metropolitano
II-98-3	NRC Staff to Discuss Apparent Violations With St. Luke's Hospital in Ponce, Puerto Rico
III-98-2	Latest NRC Assessment Rates Dresden "Acceptable" in Engineering and "Good" in Operations, Maintenance, and Plant Support
III-98-3	NRC Staff Prohibits Individual From Involvement in NRC-Licensed Activities
III-98-4	NRC Staff Rates Fermi "Superior" in Plant Support and "Good" in Operations, Maintenance, and Engineering
IV-98-1	NRC Chairman Jackson and International Nuclear Regulators Schedule News Conference in Walnut Creek
IV-98-2	NRC Chairman Jackson and International Nuclear Regulators Schedule News Conference in Las Vegas
IV-98-3	South Texas Project Rated 'Superior' in Three Areas, 'Good' in Another, in Latest NRC Systematic Assessment Report

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

IAEA Vacancy Notices

The following notice from the International Atomic Energy Agency has been posted on NRC bulletin boards:

P-3	Systems Analyst/Programmer (2 Posts) Safeguards	97/084
P-3	Systems Programmer (Computer Network Specialist) Safeguards	97/085
P-4	Systems Analyst Safeguards	97/086
P-3	Nuclear Material Accounting Analyst	97/087

ENCLOSURE O

Office of the Secretary
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending January 9, 1998

Document	Date	Subject
Decision Documents Released to the Public		
1.	SECY-97-254	10/27/97 Pilot Program with the State of Arizona
- SRM on 97-254	12/24/97	(same)
	12/24/97	(same)
Information Papers Released to the Public		
1.	SECY-97-292	12/18/97 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending December 12, 1997
2.	SECY-97-294	12/19/97 Response to Staff Requirements Memorandum of October 24, 1997, Regarding the Decision-Making Process at the Senior Management Meeting and the Benefits that the Process and the Watch List Provide in Terms of Public Health and Safety (M970919C)
3.	SECY-97-296	12/23/97 Status Report on Accident Sequence Precursor Program and Related Initiatives
4.	SECY-97-297	12/29/97 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending December 19, 1997
Memoranda Release to the Public		
1.	M971217	1/9/98 Briefing on Integration and Evaluation of Results from Recent Lessons-Learned Reviews (Including 50.59 Process Improvements) (SECY-97-205)
2.	M971212	1/9/98 Meeting with Northeast Nuclear on Millstone, (SECY-97-283)

Commission Correspondence Released to the Public

1. Letter to Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge, dtd 12/23/97, requests continued participation in the NRC's State Liaison Officer program
2. Letter to Gilbert F. Cassellas, EOC, dtd 12/23/97, provides the FY97 Program Plan Update and Accomplishment Report on the Affirmative Action Program Plan for Hiring, Placement, and Advancement of Individuals with Handicaps
3. Letter to New Mexico Governor Gary E. Johnson, dtd 12/18/97, responds to request to relinquish New Mexico's authority to evaluate and approve sealed source and device applications
4. Letter to Robert A. Backus of Backus, Meyer, Solomon, Rood & Branch, dtd 12/18/97, responds to concerns regarding decommissioning
5. Letter to Chairman R. Chidambaram, Indian Atomic Energy Commission, dtd 12/17/97, accepts invitation to be the keynote speaker at the International Conference on Fire Protection in Nuclear Installations -- "Fire Safety-98"

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Final rule: Deliberate Misconduct by Unlicensed Persons
2. Policy Statement; Amendment: Policy and Procedure for Enforcement Actions; Deliberate Misconduct Rule
3. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Subcommittee Meeting on Planning and Procedures; February 4, 1998
4. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Meeting of the ACRS Subcommittee on Plant Operations; February 3, 1998
5. Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards; Subcommittee Meeting on Advanced Reactor Designs; February 3 and 4, 1998

Region I
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending January 9, 1998

Amended Whittaker Confirmatory Action Letter

Region I issued a Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL) to Whittaker Corporation on December 2, 1997, verifying licensee commitments to ensure control of licensed material at their Greenville, Pennsylvania, site. On December 12, 1997, Whittaker Corporation, requested that the date for compliance with Item 1 of the CAL be extended to January 31, 1998. Item 1 stated, "By December 19, 1997, ensure that all licensed material outside your controlled fenced area has been recovered and is controlled within a fenced area of your property." Whittaker requested this extension due to the adverse weather conditions at the site. The CAL was amended on December 19, 1997 extending the date for compliance with Item 1 to January 31, 1998.

Region II
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending January 9, 1998

Duke Energy Corporation - Oconee Unit 1 - Update to December 28 Shutdown

Following discussions with the steam generator vendor, the licensee announced their plans to re-roll approximately 1700 tubes in the outer three peripheral rows of the 1A steam generator due to concerns that allowable accident leakage rates would be exceeded during a main steam line break.

Pressure testing of the 1B steam generator revealed minor leakage from welded tube plug.

Duke Energy Corporation - Oconee Station SALP

The Regional Administrator presented the results of the Oconee Nuclear Station Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) for the period of May 5, 1996, to November 15, 1997 at the site on January 8, 1998. A decline in the Plant Operations and Engineering ratings was attributed to deficiencies in human performance, procedural controls, problem identification and resolution, and technical support.

Following the SALP presentation a separate meeting was held with State and Local officials to discuss activities at Oconee Station.

The Region II and NRR staff also attended a separate meeting, also open to the public, which addressed several licensee initiatives described in the Duke Oconee Recovery Plan, to address performance issues at the site.

TRI -State Enforcement Conference

An enforcement conference was held with the licensee on January 6, 1998, to discuss two apparent violations associated with the security of licensed material and the transfer of licensed material to a person not authorized to receive the material. On January 8, 1998, Region II issued a Notice of Violation (Severity Level III problem, No CP). The CP was mitigated because the licensee had no prior escalated enforcement action and the corrective actions taken by the licensee.

Region III
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending January 9, 1998

Predecisional Enforcement Conference with Commonwealth Edison Company - Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station

On January 9, 1998, a Predecisional Enforcement Conference was conducted in the Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, between management representatives of Commonwealth Edison Company and members of the NRC staff. The conference was conducted to discuss the apparent failure by the utility to perform a required leakage test of the reactor vessel and certain piping systems before starting up Quad Cities Unit 2 in June of 1997. The utility did not perform the test until seven days later. During an inspection in November and December 1997, NRC inspectors found several instances where the utility inadequately implemented or missed other examinations or leakage tests. Inspectors also noted that the utility did not perform an adequate safety review of starting up the unit prior to completing the test. NRC Regional Administrator A. Bill Beach participated in the conference.

American Electric Power Management Meeting - D.C. Cook Nuclear Power Station

On January 8, 1998, a meeting was conducted in the Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, between management representatives from American Electric Power Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussed issues related to the recent NRC architect engineering inspection in November 1997 and

the associated Confirmatory Action Letter dated September 9, 1997. NRC Regional Administrator A. Bill Beach participated in the meeting.

Management Meeting with Illinois Power Company - Clinton Plant

On January 8, 1998, a management meeting was conducted at the Clinton Nuclear Power Plant, Clinton, Illinois, between management representatives of Illinois Power Company and members of the NRC staff. The utility discussed its improvement plans and the plant's current performance.

Illinois Power Company Management Changes -- Clinton Plant

On January 5, 1998, Illinois Power announced that it had selected PECO Energy Company, operator of the Peach Bottom and Limerick nuclear stations, to provide management services for the Clinton Nuclear Power Plant. PECO Energy will provide six to eight managers to fill key positions at the Clinton plant, including Chief Nuclear Officer and Plant Manager.

Walter G. MacFarland, IV, vice president of PECO's Limerick Station, is Clinton's Chief Nuclear Officer. The other positions have not yet been filled. A PECO team is onsite to begin an assessment of the Clinton facility and operations.

The management services contract is for a three-year period with the option for a five-year extension. Illinois Power will continue to maintain the NRC license for the facility and retain ultimate oversight of the plant. The Chief Nuclear Officer will report to the Illinois Power Chief Executive Officer.

Meeting with Ohio Department of Health

On January 6, 1998, NRC Region III staff members met with representatives from the Ohio Department of Health in Columbus, Ohio, to discuss Ohio's request for a Low-Level Radioactive Waste Memorandum of Understanding with the NRC and the status of Ohio's pursuit of Agreement State status.

ENCLOSURE P

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending January 9, 1998

Callaway Plant

A management meeting with representatives of the Callaway plant was held in the Region IV office on January 6, 1998. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss various emergency preparedness program activities.

Meeting of the International Nuclear Regulators Association (INRA)

The INRA meeting was held January 8-9, 1998, at the NRC Walnut Creek Field Office. The association, formed last year with an inaugural meeting in Paris, is chaired by NRC Chairman Jackson and includes senior officials from nuclear regulatory agencies in the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Following the meeting in Walnut Creek, members of the INRA toured Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Yucca Mountain.