

May 13, 1998

For: The Commissioners
 From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
 Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING MAY 8, 1998

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*No input this week

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ENCLOSURE A

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending May 8, 1998

Status of Review of Generic Letter 97-04

Generic Letter 97-04, "Assurance of Adequate NPSH for ECCS and Containment Heat Removal Pumps," was issued on October 7, 1997. The purpose of the GL was to obtain sufficient information on licensees' current NPSH analyses to allow the staff to make a judgement regarding available NPSH, including credit for containment overpressure, without performing detailed safety evaluations. The staff has completed its initial review of the GL responses. The responses have been categorized into four groups. Licensees with adequate responses (47 plants) will receive a letter closing out the licensing tasks associated with this Generic Letter. Licensees with responses where a limited amount of information is still needed to complete an evaluation (35 plants) will receive brief RAIs. A few of these responses (5 plants) will require the submittal of considerably more information than the

rest. The remaining plants (17) provided responses which raise questions regarding operating within their licensing basis with regards to containment overpressure credit. These plants will be advised of our concerns. Plans for followup staff review or inspection of these plants will be proposed to NRR management.

NRC Maintenance Rule Workshop

On April 30, 1998, Suzanne Black, Rich Correia, Ed Ford, and Bob Latta from HQMB along with Mort Fairtile from PDND conducted an NRC-sponsored workshop in the agency's Region III offices. The purpose of the workshop was to provide a forum for interaction with industry representatives and regional inspectors related to the implementation of the Maintenance Rule for decommissioning status plants. Specifically, the Maintenance Rule, 10 CFR 50.65, was amended in August 1996, to require decommissioning status plant licensees to comply with the rule. The primary topics that were discussed during the workshop included scoping issues, risk ranking practices, categorization of SSCs, and the need for periodic evaluations for the purpose of balancing availability and reliability. The workshop was attended by representatives from utilities with decommissioning status plants, several industry consultants, NEI and Regions III and IV DRS personnel. The workshop was regarded as beneficial in identifying various performance-based approaches for the implementation of the Maintenance Rule.

Salem Nuclear Generating Station Units 1 and 2

Operational Status - Salem Unit 1 was released from its last (90 percent power) hold point on April 24, 1998. The licensee is currently holding power at 94 percent power while condensate polishers are being regenerated to clear a high differential pressure condition and the no. 11 heater drain pump is being replaced. Upon completion of heater drain pump replacement and correction of the automatic rod speed control problem noted during the previous load swing tests, the 40 percent load rejection test and the feedwater pump trip test will be conducted. These tests should occur during the week of May 10. The NRC resident staff with support from regional personnel continues to provide augmented coverage of the restart ascension activities.

Salem Unit 2 is operating at 100 percent power. River grass loading conditions have subsided allowing the station to exit the abnormal operating procedure for potential bio-fouling. During the period of May 5-7, 1998, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the States of New Jersey and Delaware and other jurisdictions, and several representatives from Region I and Headquarters participated in an ingestion pathway exercise. FEMA is evaluating the exercise that includes such aspects as water and soil sampling and extended monitoring out to 50 miles from the Salem site.

Salem Assessment Panel (SAP) - The licensee is required to provide the results of its self-assessment of unit performance within 30 days after returning to full-power operation.

ACRS Briefing - The ACRS has requested a briefing from the licensee on September 2, 1998, regarding the lessons-learned from the extended dual-unit shutdown.

Calvert Cliffs Units 1 and 2

On May 4, 1998, the staff issued a license amendment which replaced the Calvert Cliffs technical specifications in their entirety with new technical specifications based on the improved Standard Technical Specifications (STS). These are the 19th and 20th units that have been approved to convert to the improved STS. The licensee will implement these revised technical specifications prior to August 1998.

South Texas Project Units 1 and 2

In discussions with the Director of NRR, the licensee for the South Texas Project (STP) has indicated that they will delay plans to implement conversion to the iSTS. As a result of prior discussions with the staff over the past few weeks, it became apparent that the schedule for review and approval of the application to convert to the iSTS would not support the planned implementation window of the end of CY 1998. The licensee has indicated that implementation would not occur prior to CY 2001, after the planned Unit 1 steam generator replacement, and could be delayed until CY 2003 if a decision is made to replace Unit 2 steam generators. It was agreed that further discussions should be held to determine how best to proceed with the review given the significant delay in the iSTS implementation and to plan for a number of licensing amendments that would be necessary to support future outages given the delay in iSTS conversion.

Management Changes

Pennsylvania Power and Light Company's (PP&L) board of directors recently elected Robert F. Saunders as Vice President-Nuclear Site Operations and George T. Jones as Vice President-Nuclear Engineering and Support. Both appointments will become effective June 15, 1998.

Mr. Saunders, who is coming to PP&L from Virginia Power (VP) where he served as Vice President-Nuclear Engineering and Services, will be responsible for the oversight of Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (SSES) Units 1 and 2. He will be located at the SSES site.

When the Vice President-Nuclear Site Operations position was created in December 1997, Mr. Jones, who was Vice President-Nuclear Operations for PP&L at the time, began performing the duties of the position on a temporary basis. Mr. Saunders and Mr. Jones will report directly to R. G. Byram, Senior Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer.

ENCLOSURE B

Meeting with Amersham Regarding Transportation Packaging

On April 30, 1998, management from the Spent Fuel Project Office and the Division of Industrial and Medical Nuclear Safety met with Amersham Corporation management. Amersham Corporation is a holder of approximately 20 Certificates of Compliance for transportation packages, including radiographic exposure devices. The meeting was held to discuss problems that had been identified with respect to Amersham's activities under 10 CFR Part 71, including engineering and testing of transportation packages, and quality assurance activities associated with package testing. Amersham described steps that have been taken and are planned to address these problems on a programmatic level. Amersham also discussed the plans for assessment and retesting of transportation packages that are currently certified by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Amersham also informed the staff that it is a "wholly owned" subsidiary of AEA Technologies of the U.K.

Transnuclear, Inc. Request for Exemption from 10 CFR 72.234(c)

The Spent Fuel Project Office granted two exemptions to 10 CFR 72.234(c) to Transnuclear, Inc. (TN). The exemptions permit TN to fabricate nine TN-68 casks for use at Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station (PBAPS) and five TN-32 casks for use at McGuire Nuclear Station (McGuire) prior to receipt of the cask Certificate of Compliance (COC). The exemptions authorize fabrication only and do not authorize use of the casks to store spent fuel. That will occur only when, and if, a COC is issued. The casks are fabricated at TN's risk, including the risk that the casks may not be usable if they do not meet specifications or conditions placed in a COC that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission may ultimately approve.

PBAPS and McGuire will lose full core off-load capability in 2000. The exemptions were requested so that TN could begin procurement of materials to supply casks, if a COC is issued, by 2000 and therefore minimize or prevent loss of full core off-load capability at these two facilities.

Nuclear Assurance Corporation, International, Response Delayed

The Spent Fuel Project Office (SFPO) staff have been performing an accelerated review of an application to authorize the transport of TRIGA spent fuel to support the Department of Energy's (DOE) Foreign Research Reactor Spent Nuclear Fuel Acceptance program. The Nuclear Assurance Corporation, International (NAC) applications for the Legal Weight Truck cask seek approval to transport intact and failed TRIGA fuel elements. On April 1 and 15, 1998, SFPO staff forwarded requests for additional information to NAC. NAC has informed SFPO that the request for additional information responses, originally scheduled for receipt on May 4, 1998, will be delayed by approximately one week. DOE has requested approval by May 18, 1998, to support the shipment schedule.

Spent Fuel Routing Study Issued by the Department of Transportation

The Department of Transportation has just issued a final report entitled, "Identification of Factors for Selecting Mode and Routes for Shipping High-Level Radioactive Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel." The report was prepared in response to the requirements of Section 15 of the Hazardous Materials Transportation Uniform Safety Act of 1990. In order to enhance overall public safety, the report identifies and evaluates the primary factors that should be considered by shippers and carriers in selecting the modes and routes for the transport of high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel.

ENCLOSURE C

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Nuclear Criticality Slide Rule

On April 30, 1998, Volume 2 of NUREG/CR-6504, ORNL/TM-13322, "An Updated Nuclear Criticality Slide Rule," was published to support the agency's response capability in the event of a nuclear criticality incident. This volume contains the functional version of the updated nuclear criticality slide rule that is referenced in the technical basis. Volume 1, of this NUREG. Volume 2 of this NUREG provides an *in-hand* method for estimating pertinent nuclear criticality accident information from sliding graphs to be used by incident response personnel at both the NRC and the licensee's facility in the event of a nuclear criticality accident information about fission yield magnitude estimation and dose estimates, along with other pertinent accident response information.

ENCLOSURE F

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Acquisition Training

On April 30, 1998, the Division of Contracts and Property Management conducted its Acquisition for Project Managers module, "Organizational Conflict of Interest" (COI) for 14 project managers on April 30, 1998. The training presentation included a discussion defining conflict of interest and analyzing the agency regulation treating COI. Lectures also included the process for identifying and eliminating COI for both contract awards to the private sector and

DOE laboratory agreements. Class participants worked in groups to analyze situations to determine if COI existed and, if so, how to eliminate the COI.

U.S. Enrichment Corporation (USEC)

On May 6, 1998, DFS staff attended a USEC sponsored briefing on the AVLIS technology. The purpose of the briefing was to begin detailed discussions between the NRC and USEC regarding NRC's review of an AVLIS license application. During the briefing, USEC discussed certain AVLIS licensing issues and technology. The second half of the briefing, which was closed to the public, was classified and included a detailed discussion of the separator technology.

Security Support

DFS is working with NRR and NMSS to provide security support for public meetings to be held in Las Vegas, NV on the UNLV campus (pre-licensing review for Yucca Mountain) on May 13, 1998 and in Parks Township, PA (decommissioning of a B&W shallow land disposal area) on May 27, 1998.

ENCLOSURE G

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests Received during the 5-Day Period of May 1, 1998 - May 7, 1998:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Palisades site, VSC-24 lid welds, results of demonstration of examination techniques. | (FOIA/PA-98-188) |
| Yucca Mountain. | (FOIA/PA-98-189) |
| Susquehanna SES, Assist to Inspection A1-96-026 related to investigation 1-96-039. | (FOIA/PA-98-190) |
| San Onofre, OI case 4-94-035, San Onofre and So. Calif. Edison documents reviewed by OI. | (FOIA/PA-98-191) |

ENCLOSURE I

Office of Human Resources
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Public Service Recognition Week Mall Event Attended

On May 7-9, 1998, Henry Rubin, Nancy Hughitt, and Pam Easson attended the Public Service Recognition Week Event on the Mall. Nearly 100 government agencies participated in this event to demonstrate the innovation and quality of work performed by public employees.

Seminar Attended on Internet Recruitment Marketing Strategies

On May 6, 1998, Henry Rubin attended a seminar on Internet Recruitment Marketing Strategies in Falls Church, Virginia. This seminar was sponsored by Bernard Hodes Advertising, which handles NRC's recruitment advertising campaign. Several methods of advertising on the World Wide Web were discussed at this meeting.

| Arrivals | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|------|
| COMAR, Manny | Project Manager | NMSS |
| GARY, Marva | Civil Rights Program Manager | SBCR |
| GORDON, Judy | Management Analyst | OIG |
| HOFFMAN, Alison | Human Resources Specialist | HR |
| WHEELER, Virginia | Consultant | OIG |
| Departures | | |
| BELTZ, Terry | Resident Inspector | RI |
| WALLING, Margie | Management Analyst | OIG |

ENCLOSURE M

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Media Interest

Eric Leeds and Tim Kobetz, SFPO, were interviewed by a reporter from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel about Transnuclear's request for an exemption from rulemaking for the manufacture of TN-32 casks to be used by Wisconsin Electric.

School Volunteers Program

Sudhamay Basu, RES, and Ron Hernan, NRR, judged the Prince George's County science fair, "Kids for Science."

Lou Numkin, OCIO, spoke about computer ethics at Thomas Edison H.S. Mary Jane Rose-Lee, NRR, spoke about engineering careers at Poolesville H.S. Patrick Isaac, NRR, spoke at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, about NRC careers.

Press Releases

Headquarters:

- 98-64 Note to Editors: ACRS schedules four subcommittee meetings
- 98-65 NRC Issues Comments to Fish and Wildlife Service on its Revised Draft Opinion on Utah Site Cleanup Plan
- 98-66 NRC Employees Receive Presidential Rank Awards

Regions:

- I-98-50 NRC, Utility to Discuss Apparent Violations at Indian Point 2
- I-98-51 NRC Lifts Restrictions on Radiological Work at Haddam Neck
- I-98-52 NRC Rates Beaver Valley "Good" in Latest Assessment
- I-98-53 NRC to Discuss Security Violations at Nine Mile Point Station
- III-98-30 NRC Staff Rates Prairie Island "Superior" in Maintenance and Plant Support and "Good" in Operations and Engineering
- III-98-31 NRC and American Electric Power Co. Officials to Discuss Apparent Violations at D.C. Cook Plant
- IV-98-19 Thomas Farnholtz Assigned Senior Resident Inspector for NRC at Waterford 3

ENCLOSURE N

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Nuclear Energy Agency Steering Committee

R. Hauber, Division Director for Nonproliferation, Exports and Multilateral Relations, headed the U.S. delegation to the May 1998 meeting of the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) Steering Committee, standing in for DOE Nuclear Energy Director Terry Lash who was unable to attend. The Steering Committee reviewed the recommendations of the High Level Advisory Group on the Future Role of the NEA (the Birkhofer Report) and approved a letter to the OECD Secretary General providing its views; reviewed and approved in principle the NEA Program of Work for 1999-2000 on the condition that the Legal Division's program and priorities would be revised to emphasize efforts to remove legal impediments to the further use of nuclear energy (e.g., global third party liability regime); discussed and endorsed steps to promote closer NEA cooperation with the International Energy Agency and other OECD entities on sustainable energy issues and with the IAEA more generally (to include completion of an MOU to help avoid excessive duplication of activities); and endorsed steps by the NEA Director General and the Steering Committee to be completed by early next year to complete an NEA Mission Statement and Strategic Plan.

ENCLOSURE O

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

| Document | Date | Subject |
|--|--------|---|
| Decision Documents Released to the Public | | |
| 1. SECY-98-040 | 3/5/98 | Final Rule: Requirements for Shipping Packages Used to Transport Vitrified High-Level Waste |

| | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---------|---|
| | Commission Voting Record on 98-040 | 4/30/98 | (same) |
| Negative Consent Documents Released to the Public | | | |
| 1. | SECY-98-056 | 3/24/98 | Rulemaking Plan: Elimination of 30-day Hold in Loading Spent Fuel After Preoperational Testing of Independent Spent Fuel Storage or Monitored Retrievable Storage Installations |
| | SRM on 98-056 | 4/27/98 | (same) |
| 2. | SECY-98-042 | 3/5/98 | Amendment to SECY-97-288, "Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences for Fiscal Year 1997" |
| | SRM on 98-042 | 4/20/98 | (same) |
| Information Papers Released to the Public | | | |
| 1. | SECY-98-088 | 4/23/98 | Weekly Information Report - Week Ending April 17, 1998 |
| 2. | SECY-98-090 | 4/24/98 | Selected Issues Related to Recovery of Millstone Nuclear Power Station Unit 3 |
| 3. | SECY-98-092 | 4/30/98 | Weekly Information Report - Week Ending April 24, 1998 |
| 4. | SECY-98-094 | 5/1/98 | Proposed NRC Generic Letter 98-XX, "Year 2000 Readiness of Computer Systems at Nuclear Power Plants" |

Commission Correspondence Released to the Public

1. Letters to Representatives Joel Hefley, Loretta Sanchez, Pat Danner, J.C. Watts, Jr., Ed Pastor, Joe Knollenberg, Rob Portman, George Nethercutt, and Senator Paul Coverdell dated April 30, 1998 responds to concerns about possible changes in the NRC's 10 CFR part 35 regulations on medical use of byproduct material (Incomings of March 31, April 2, April 3, April 9, April 13, and April 14, 1998 also released).
2. Letter to President of the Senate Albert Gore and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich dated May 1, 1998 provides the NRC quarterly report on the nondisclosure of safeguards for the quarter beginning January 1 and extending through March 31, 1998.
3. Letter to Aida Alvarez, Administrator of the Small Business Administration, provides NRC's FY 1997 achievements under the Procurement Preference Program.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences; Fiscal Year 1997; Dissemination of Information.
2. NRC Enforcement Policy (NUREG-1600, Rev. 1); Policy Statement: Revision.
3. Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste; Notice of Meeting on June 10-12, 1998.
4. ACRS Subcommittee Meeting on Materials and Metallurgy; Notice of Meeting on June 1, 1998.
5. ACRS Subcommittee Meeting on Safety Research Program; Notice of Meeting on June 1, 1998.
6. ACRS Subcommittee Meeting on Planning and Procedures; Notice of Meeting on June 2, 1998.
7. ACRS Subcommittee Meeting on Thermal-Hydraulic Phenomena; Notice of Meeting on June 2, 1998.

ENCLOSURE P

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Haddam Neck-Confirmatory Action Letter Closed Relative to Radiological Control Program

On May of 1998, Region I Issued an Inspection Report and CAL close-out letter to Connecticut Yankee Atomic Power Company. CAL 1-97-007 was established on March 4, 1997, to address significant radiological program deficiencies observed at Haddam Neck that warranted increased regulatory response. The CAL resulted in the licensee's commitment to restrict the performance of significant radiological work until extensive program improvement efforts were successfully achieved. The CAL close-out letter, based on the accompanying NRC Inspection Report (IR 50-213/98-02), confirmed that the licensee satisfactorily completed all of the required commitments and actions. Close out of the CAL enables the licensee to proceed

with major decommissioning activities, including Reactor Coolant System chemical decontamination. A press release was issued by the Region I PAO.

Pre-decisional Enforcement Conference with Altoona Hospital

A pre-decisional enforcement conference was held on April 30, 1998, in Region I with Altoona Hospital. The conference focused on apparent violations, including repeat violations, identified during a March 9-10, 1998 inspection of the licensee's implementation of the Radiation Safety Program and Quality Management Program. The apparent violations involved failure to secure licensed radioactive materials against unauthorized removal and the licensee's failure to use the required written directives prior to administration of radiopharmaceutical to patients. The licensee acknowledged the apparent violations, provided corrective actions, provided actions to prevent recurrence, and discussed mitigating circumstances surrounding the apparent violations. NRC staff acknowledged the licensee's corrective actions and presented enforcement sanctions available to the NRC. Enforcement action is under consideration.

ENCLOSURE P

Region III
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Management Meeting with Illinois Power Company - Clinton

On May 5, 1998, a management meeting was conducted in Clinton, Illinois, between management representatives from Illinois Power Company and members of the NRC staff. The meeting discussion focused on the utility's performance improvement initiatives at the Clinton Nuclear Power Plant. NRC Region III Regional Administrator participated in the meeting.

Exit Meeting with Detroit Edison Company - Fermi

On May 6, 1998, NRC Region III Regional Administrator participated in an inspection exit meeting that was conducted between management representatives from Detroit Edison Company and members of the NRC staff to discuss response time testing issues that were found in an NRC inspection last year at the Fermi Nuclear Power Plant.

In September 1997, the NRC completed an Engineering and Technical Support inspection at the Fermi Nuclear Power Station. During that inspection, elimination of response time testing under the provisions of federal regulations for trip functional units in the reactor protection system and for trip units in the isolation and core cooling systems was also reviewed. At the end of the inspection, elimination of the response time testing under federal regulations appeared to involve violations of NRC requirements; however, no violations were issued due to the need to consider potential generic concerns revealed through similar concerns at several other plants.

Debriefing with NRC Inspection Team and Commonwealth Edison Company -Quad Cities

On May 8, 1998, NRC Region III Regional Administrator participated in a debriefing on last week's NRC Appendix R Fire Protection inspection at Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station. The debriefing was conducted between management representatives from Commonwealth Edison Company and members of the NRC staff at the Quad Cities plant.

ENCLOSURE P

Region IV
Items of Interest
Week Ending May 8, 1998

Working Level Meeting on Cooper Nuclear Station Engineering Improvement Plan

On May 4, 1998, NRC and Cooper working level staff met to discuss Revision 1 to the Cooper Strategy for Achieving Engineering Excellence. The Cooper Acting Senior Engineering Manager and his reports provided an overview of the Strategy to the Chief, Projects Branch C, and other members of the NRC working group on Cooper Engineering. The Cooper staff responded to NRC questions, and agreed to provide additional information in response to some of the questions. An additional public meeting, involving NRC and Cooper senior managers is scheduled for May 18, 1998, at Cooper Nuclear Station.

Grand Gulf Inadvertent Disengagement of Inspection Tool Ring from its Lifting Device While Over the Reactor Vessel

At approximately 10:30 a.m. on May 7, 1998, a core shroud inspection tool ring became dislodged from the strong back being used to lift the ring during a planned heavy lift to remove the ring from the reactor vessel flange. The licensee had already completed all fuel movement for the in-process Refueling Outage 9. The tool ring became disconnected from the lifting rig at two adjacent suspension points of the four suspension points on the strong back. The ring was bearing against the top of the drywell flange, the drywell manway covers, and the drywell head studs, and did not impact any vessel internals as it shifted. The ring weighed approximately 850 lbs and the strong back assembly used to secure the tool ring to the polar crane weighed approximately 640 lbs.

Immediate licensee actions included stopping work in the area, halting all operations which could affect flow into the reactor, ensuring that secondary

containment was available, and securing the ring to the polar crane and refueling bridge structure with ropes. The licensee developed a heavy lift plan to move the ring to a safe location, and by 6:30 p.m., May 8, had recovered the ring and secured it on the refueling floor.

Region IV and the resident inspector staff monitored the licensee's actions throughout the recovery operation.

ENCLOSURE R

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending May 8, 1998

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, No. 15

| OCA CONTACT | DATE & PLACE | TIME | WITNESS | SUBJECT | COMMITTEE |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------|--|---|--|
| Gerke | 05/12 2154 RHOB | 10:00 | TBA | Splitting up OMB into Two Offices | Reps. Horn/Kucinich Gov't Management, Info & Technology Government Reform & Oversight |
| Callahan | 05/12 2123 RHOB | 1:00 | GAO, DOE | Management Problems at Hanford Nuclear Facility | Reps. Barton/Klink Oversight & Investigations Commerce |
| Gerke | 05/14 2318 RHOB | 2:00 | Hugh Thompson, FERC, PEPCO, Texas PUC, Digital | Effects of Year 2000 on Energy Utilities | Reps. Morella/Barcia Technology Science |
| Callahan | 05/20 TBA | P.M. | NRC, DOE | External Regulation of DOE Defense Facilities | Reps. Schaefer/Hall Energy and Power Commerce |
| Callahan | 05/21 2325 RHOB | 10:00 | NRC, DOE, OSHA, GAO | External Regulation of DOE Defense Facilities | Reps. Calvert/Roemer Energy & Environment Reps. Pickering/Johnson Basic Research Science |