

INFORMATION REPORT

September 15, 2004

SECY-04-0164

For: The Commissioners
From: William M. Dean, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: SECY-04-0164 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK
ENDING SEPTEMBER 3, 2004

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*No input this week.

/RA/

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 3, 2004

NRC Information Notice (IN) 2004-17: Loose Part Detection and Computerized Eddy Current Data Analysis in Steam Generators

On August 25, 2004, NRC issued the subject IN to inform addressees about recent operating experience regarding (1) the challenges associated with the detection of loose parts and related tube damage in steam generators and (2) computerized data screening algorithms used in the evaluation of steam generator tube eddy current test data. The IN describes a situation in 2001 at the Shearon Harris nuclear power plant, in which the licensee detected minor primary-to-secondary leakage in the "C" steam generator and later found a loose part at the damage location. The licensee also found that the computerized data screening algorithm used for secondary analysis did not detect this indication because improper settings caused the computer analysis to skip the portion of the tube containing the indication.

NRC Generic Letter (GL) 2004-01: Requirements for Steam Generator (SG) Tube Inspections

On August 30, 2004, NRC issued the subject GL to all pressurized water reactor licensees requesting that licensees: (1) submit a description of the SG tube inspections performed at their plants, including an assessment of whether these inspections ensure compliance with the technical specification (TS) requirements; (2) to propose plans for complying with the SG tube inspection TS requirements for addressees who conclude that they are not in compliance; and (3) submit a safety assessment that addresses any differences between licensee's practices and the NRC's position regarding the requirements of the TS.

Exchange Meeting between the NRC and India's Atomic Energy Regulatory Board

On September 1, 2004, the Division of Inspection Program Management (DIPM) staff participated in a Bilateral Technical Exchange Meeting between the NRC and India's Atomic Energy Regulatory Board. Staff from DIPM presented an overview of the Reactor Oversight Process and a more detailed discussion of the Significance Determination Process.

Meeting with Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Maryland (PJM) Electric Grid Operators

On August 26, 2004, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) staff met with representatives of the PJM electric grid operators at their offices in Philadelphia to discuss grid management as it pertains to the supply of reliable offsite power to the member nuclear power plants. PJM indicated that its entire network is equipped with an automated contingency analysis for every six minutes of operation. Any potential degraded condition of offsite power is automatically relayed to nearby nuclear stations. PJM has a working group consisting of various nuclear stations to address specific issues related to maintaining offsite power and to develop operating procedures related to grid management. PJM has invited NRC's participation in future working group meetings.

Meeting with Entergy Nuclear to Discuss Grand Gulf Early Site Permit Application

On August 25-26, 2004, NRR staff and the staff's consultants from the U.S. Geological Survey and Brookhaven National Laboratories met with Entergy representatives at the Grand Gulf nuclear power plant to discuss the geological, seismological, and geotechnical characterization of the Grand Gulf plant site, as part of the staff's review of Entergy's early site permit application. After a tour of the proposed site to view the locations of boreholes and other subsurface explorations, the staff visited the location of the future intake structure. The staff plans to issue requests for additional information to Entergy in the near future.

Audit of Vermont Yankee Steam Dryer Analysis

On August 24-26, 2004, staff members from NRR and the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES), as well as staff contractors from the Argonne National Laboratory (ANL), conducted a technical audit of the analysis submitted by Entergy Nuclear Northeast (licensee) regarding the steam dryer at the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant. The steam dryer analysis was submitted as part of the licensee's request to operate the plant at extended power uprate (EPU) conditions. The audit was conducted at the General Electric Nuclear Energy offices in San Jose, CA., with the objective of assessing the adequacy of the licensee's steam dryer structural integrity analysis under extended power uprate-related flow-induced vibration loading conditions. A potential cause of recent steam dryer cracking is flow-induced vibration. Therefore, there is a need to understand the loading phenomena and the steam dryer structural response. RES plans to undertake independent analyses to explore the potential causes of flow-induced degradation. The outcome of these analyses and insights will be used in conducting power uprate reviews and will also allow the NRC to evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.

American Society of Mechanical Engineering (ASME) Code Meetings

During the week of August 30, 2004, NRR and RES staff attended the ASME Code meetings in New Orleans, LA. Of note was that a newly formed Task Group (TG) on Examination of Steam Generator Tubes held its initial meeting on August 30, 2004. The charter of the TG is to assess the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Section XI Code to determine what revisions of the Code are necessary to integrate the objectives of the Code with the current industry program for maintaining steam generator integrity. At this meeting, 17 Code paragraphs were identified and assigned to TG members to review for possible changes. The TG consisted of members from Electric Power Research Institute, nuclear power utilities, Hartford Steam Boiler, Aptech Engineering, and the NRC.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 3, 2004

Meeting with General Nuclear Systems, Inc.

On September 1, 2004, staff from the Spent Fuel Project Office met with General Nuclear Systems, Inc. (GNSI) to discuss the proposed drop testing protocol and predictive analysis performed in support of future applications for a 10 CFR Part 71 and 72 Certificate of Compliance for the CONSTOR Storage and Transport Cask System. Later this month, GNSI plans to perform full-scale drop testing of the CONSTOR in Germany, to support the review and approval of the application. The staff is planning to observe the drop testing.

Workshop on Extreme Ground Motion at Yucca Mountain

On August 23-25, 2004, a staff member of the Division of High-Level Waste Repository Safety observed a public workshop in Palo Alto, California, on "Extreme Ground Motion at Yucca Mountain, Nevada." This workshop was sponsored by the Department of Energy's Science and Technology Program of the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management. The outcome of the workshop will be a set of recommendations to define the physical limits to earthquake ground motion to be used for seismic design at Yucca Mountain.

32nd International Geological Congress in Florence, Italy

On August 20-28, 2004, staff from NRC Headquarters and the Center for Nuclear Waste Regulatory Analyses participated in the quadrennial International Geological Congress, held in Florence, Italy. The purpose of the meeting was to foster public confidence in scientific studies and to bridge the gap between basic and applied sciences, with an emphasis on natural and man-induced hazards. Staff presented results of five investigations ancillary to its anticipated review of a license application for the Yucca Mountain high-level waste repository. The subjects included: methods to evaluate risk from fault displacements; thermodynamic modeling of brine chemistry; experimental and thermodynamic modeling of ion-exchange equilibria; stratigraphic record of Basin and Range extension; and structural evolution of the Crater Flat basin. This meeting of international geoscientists enabled staff to interact with colleagues interested in Yucca Mountain tectonics and geochemistry, and to learn how other countries are applying geophysical and geochemical methods and ideas to the geologic disposal of radioactive waste.

Workshop on Hearing Process for Affected Units of Local Government

On August 24, 2004, staff from the Division of High-Level Waste Repository Safety, the Office of the General Counsel (OGC), the Spent Fuel Project Office, and the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel conducted a workshop on the NRC's hearing process. NRC staff organized the workshop to provide a forum for the affected units of local government to obtain information and ask questions of NRC staff. The Counties requested the workshop to help them as they prepare to decide how best to participate in an NRC hearing, should NRC receive an application from the Department of Energy (DOE) for authorization to build a repository at Yucca Mountain. NRC staff members spoke about NRC's licensing process; the formal hearing

process; criteria governing NRC's adoption of a Final Environmental Impact Statement for a potential repository at Yucca Mountain; NRC's role in the safe transport of spent nuclear fuel; and the role and use of NRC's Licensing Support Network. OGC's special counsel for public liaison facilitated the meeting and participants had opportunities for questions and discussion.

Participants included representatives from 9 counties in Nevada and California identified as affected units of local government in accordance with the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. Also present were representatives of: the State of Nevada; the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe; the Nevada legislature; and Bechtel/SAIC, DOE's contractor at Yucca Mountain.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 3, 2004

Public Meeting on Treatment of Uncertainties and Alternative Approaches Used in Probabilistic Risk Assessments (PRAs)

On August 27, 2004, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) staff held a public meeting to discuss ongoing efforts to develop guidance on the treatment of uncertainties in risk-informed decision-making and alternative approaches used in PRAs. The purpose of the meeting was to share the staff's approach and preliminary work in this area and to solicit feedback from stakeholders. The meeting was well attended and included representatives from Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), Nuclear Energy Institute, Westinghouse, licensees, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration, as well as staff from the Offices of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) and Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS).

Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR) Meeting

On August 30, 2004, RES and NRR staff met with a representative from the PBMR LTD., Republic of South Africa (RSA). The purpose of the meeting was to update the staff on the status of the PBMR project, including the PBMR plant design and the company's plan to: (1) conduct preapplication interactions with the staff on selected key technical topics beginning in April 2005; and (2) submit the PBMR design for NRC certification in the first quarter of Calendar Year 2007. According to PBMR Ltd, construction on the demonstration PBMR plant at the Koeberg site, RSA, will begin in April 2007 and operation is envisioned to commence in 2010. The staff plans to hold a followup meeting with PBMR Ltd., on November 3, 2004, to discuss their plan for preapplication interactions, submitting the PBMR design certification application, and US industry involvement in PBMR project activities. The staff informed PBMR Ltd., that NRC did not budget for the review of the PBMR in FY 2005-2007 and that Commission approval would be needed to reprogram resources to accommodate review activities.

Office of Administration
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 3, 2004

Contract Awards

On August 31, 2004, fixed-price Contract No. NRC-21-04-232 was awarded to Neal R. Gross and Company, Inc., as a result of a small business set-aside competition. The contractor will provide court reporting services. The contract value is estimated at \$7,232,590 for the base year and three one-year options.

On August 31, 2004, fixed price Delivery Order No. DR-02-04-010 was awarded to ICF, Incorporated, under the General Services Administration's Federal Supply Schedule for technical assistance in the development of an Environmental Impact Statement for the United States Enrichment Corporation's American Centrifuge Plant. The period of performance is fifteen months, with a one-year optional task. The estimated value of the order is \$928,118.

On August 27, 2004, a competitive Delivery Order No. NRC-02-04-011, entitled SafeSource Phase I Acquisition, was awarded to PEC Solutions, Inc., under the Software Development Functional Area of CISSCO II Blanket Purchase Agreement. The purpose of this delivery order is to obtain contractor support in developing and deploying an Information Technology system that will support the new SafeSource business practices needed to improve security for nuclear radioactive materials. The contract value is estimated at \$4,468,266 for the base task and two optional tasks.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 3, 2004

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Proposes Disposition Schedule for Short-Term Temporary E-Mail Records

Consistent with Executive Order 12866 which required that proposed agency rules involving a significant regulatory action be reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), NARA has submitted a proposed rule to OMB that will allow agencies to manage e-mail records with retention periods of 120 days or less within the e-mail system. This will decrease the burden associated with printing such records for retention as paper collections and/or as other electronic record copies. NARA also believes this change in policy for managing short-term e-mail records will encourage agency staff to more willingly create record copies of the relatively small portion of e-mail records that warrant long-term or permanent retention. After OMB's review, NARA will notice the rule for public comment, at which time the NRC will have the opportunity to review for comment.

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ENCLOSURE G

Office of Public Affairs
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Media Interest

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) handled significant media inquiries on the following:

The Atomic Safety & Licensing Board's ruling on the Department of Energy's certification regarding availability of the Yucca Mountain-related documents.

Security improvements at nuclear power plants (9/11 anniversary).

Shutdown of Indian Point 2.

Mid-cycle assessment letters for various nuclear plants.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
04-100	NRC to Meet with Local Residents in Sioux Falls to Discuss Final Cleanup of Former Nuclear Reactor Site (8/30)
04-101	NRC Licensing Board Issues Decision on Adequacy of DOE Document Production Relating to Yucca Mountain Licensing Proceeding (8/31)
04-102	Note to Editors: New Public Affairs Officer in NRC Headquarters (8/31)
04-103	NRC Staff Issues Generic Letter on Nuclear Power Plant Steam Generator Inspections (9/1)
04-104	Advisory Committee on the Medical Uses of Isotopes to Meet October 13-14 in Rockville, Maryland (9/1)
04-105	NRC Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards to Meet September 9-11 in Rockville, Maryland (9/1)
04-106	NRC Issues Mid-Cycle Assessments for All Nuclear Plants (9/2)

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 3, 2004

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Information Papers		
1. SECY-04-0150	8/16/04	Alternate Approaches for Resolving the Pressurized Water Reactor Sump Blockage Issue (GSI-191), Including Realistic and Risk-Informed Considerations
2. SECY-04-0158	8/30/04	SECY-04-0158 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending August 20, 2004
Memoranda		
1. M040903	9/3/04	Staff Requirements - Affirmation Session: I. SECY-04-0153-Public Citizen's Request for Hearing on the Commission's July 2, 2004 Spent Fuel Security Order and Proposed Order Holding Proceeding in Abeyance

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. State of Utah: Discontinuance of Certain Commission Regulatory Authority Within the State; Notice of Amendment to Agreement Between the NRC and the State of Utah.
2. State of Utah: Final Determination on Proposed Alternative Groundwater Standards for 11e.(2) Byproduct Material.
3. Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, In the Matter of Exelon Generation Company, LLC (Early Site Permit for Clinton ESP Site), Docket No. 52-007-ESP, ASLBP No. 04-821-01-ESP, August 31, 2004, Notice of Hearing (Application for Early Site Permit).
4. Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, In the Matter of System Energy Resources, Inc. (Early Site Permit for Grand Gulf ESP Site), Docket No. 52-009-ESP, ASLBP No. 04-823-03-ESP, August 31, 2004, Notice of Hearing (Application for Early Site Permit).
5. Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, In the Matter of Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC (Early Site Permit for North Anna ESP Site), Docket No. 52-008-ESP, ASLBP No. 04-822-02-ESP, August 31, 2004, Notice of Hearing (Application for Early Site Permit).

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 3, 2004

NRC Senior Management Visit to Browns Ferry and Bellefonte

On September 1, 2004, the Regional Administrator toured the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant in Athens, Alabama, and met with licensee management and the resident inspector. On the following day, the Regional Administrator toured the Bellefonte Nuclear Plant in Scottsboro, Alabama, and met with the licensee management.

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ENCLOSURE P

Region IV
Items of Interest
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Callaway - Plant Management Changes

On September 1, 2004, Ameren/Union Electric Corporation, the licensee for the Callaway nuclear power plant, announced that Senior Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer Garry Randolph will retire at the end of the year. Also, effective September 1, 2004, Charles D. Naslund has assumed the position of Vice President, Nuclear Operations, replacing Ronald D. Affolter. Mr. Naslund was previously Vice President, Power Operations, of Ameren/UE.

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ENCLOSURE P

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
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CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 70

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Keeling	09/14/04 2247 RHOB	10:00	NRC, GAO, NEI, and others	Homeland Security: Monitoring Nuclear Power Plant Security	Reps. Shays/Kucinich National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations Government Reform
Portner	TBA SD-124	TBA	Markup	FY2005 Energy and Water Development Appropriations	Senators Domenici/Reid Energy and Water Development Appropriations
Keeling	TBA 345 CHOB	TBA	Markup	Homeland Security Authorization	Reps. Cox/Turner Select Committee on Homeland Security