



# Meeting on the NRC Fee Process

Katie Sweeney  
National Mining Association  
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# General Concerns Regarding Fees

- Lack of Cost Containment
- Invoices Lack Sufficient Detail
  - This problem is magnified for Contractor invoices
  - Licensees are unable to determine the work being done
- Timeliness of Invoices
  - Have arrived years late
  - Haven't arrived before letter stating payment is past due
- Inability to budget for projects based on past bills
- Lack of deadlines for work to be completed
- Generally, see Attachment A – NMA 2016 Fee Comments

# Cost Containment

- Could be improved by utilization of risk-informed decision-making
  - Focus on issues that are of low risk results in higher fees and waste of both staff and industry resources
- Investigate ways to reduce fees by streamlining regulatory processes
  - BUT must utilize the streamlined regulatory process to fullest effect: GEIS example
  - NRC and Industry anticipated that license application reviews would be more efficient and less costly
    - Lengthy NEPA Reviews – not properly tiered off GEIS
    - Fees Continue to Escalate (See attachments B & C)

# Minimum Recommendations for Level of Invoice Detail

- Identify specific NRC Staff member(s) by name for time spent on licensee/license applicant matters
- Provide an explanation of the nature and subject of the work performed
- Provide a numerical total of the time spent on a particular date on such work
- Break down work done on specific reviews of licensing action into subsets
  - For example: time spent on the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 Tribal Consultation process
- Provide any relevant explanation of unusual or abnormally large amounts of time/dollars spent on any project or subset thereof
- NRC contractors prepare and submit their invoices in the same format and with the same content as NRC invoices

# Use of Flat Fees

- Can improve cost containment
- Allows the agency and licensees to better budget resources
- NMA and NRC discussed this approach as early as 2011
  - At that point, NRC may not yet have had the needed information and experience on number of hours and typical timeframes to establish flat fees
  - By 2016, flat fees should be possible

# Concepts included in SECY-16-0097

- Concept 3 – Flat Fees
  - NMA agrees that NRC should establish typical timeframes for activities and promote use of flat fees
  - Flat fees would definitely increase the predictability for stakeholders
  - NMA does not believe transitioning to flat fees should take until the 2020 Fee Rule to be implemented
- Concept 4 – Charging Hourly Fees for All Contested Hearings
  - NMA is opposed to charging hourly fees for hearings as hearings are outside the control of the licensee/applicant
  - NMA agrees with the concern raised that stakeholders could abuse the hourly fee approach in an attempt to increase the cost of licensing