

April 10, 1998

MEMORANDUM L. Joseph Callan Executive Director for Operations

TO:

FROM: Annette L. Vietti-Cook, Acting Secretary /s/

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - SECY-97-295 - TWO-YEAR REVIEW OF THE ENFORCEMENT POLICY,  
PROPOSED REVISION TO THE ENFORCEMENT POLICY, NUREG-1600, REV. 1

This is to advise you that the Commission has not objected to issuance of the proposed 2-year report as NUREG-1622 and publishing the revised Enforcement Policy and the associated recommendations in the Federal Register.

1. The staff should develop for Commission review and approval a definition and explanation of "regulatory concern or regulatory significance" for possible inclusion in the Enforcement Policy. In explaining these key terms, the staff should address such questions, posed by the Nuclear Energy Institute and the Union of Concerned Scientists, as what factors should be considered when a single event discloses a programmatic issue in comparison to a programmatic issue based on time. The staff's submission to the Commission should elucidate the use of the terms "programmatic breakdown" and "management involvement" in the consideration of "regulatory concern or regulatory significance." For example, the staff should explain how "programmatic breakdowns" and "management involvement" extend "regulatory concern" beyond the other typical issues of regulatory concern, e.g., repetition, willfulness, and reporting violations. In particular, the staff should clarify in guidance, as needed, two specific ways in which the term "programmatic breakdown" is used: first, to characterize a situation in which the same basic violation has occurred multiple times -- what we sometimes refer to as the degree of "pervasiveness"; and second, for a circumstance in which the violation has occurred only once, but multiple barriers were in place to prevent its occurrence, and each, in turn, broke down (hence a "programmatic breakdown" of a different nature).

(EDO)

(SECY Suspense: 10/23/98)

2. The staff should consider improvement in the explanation of "safety significance" in the Enforcement Manual (Section 3.5.a). The staff should review the advantages and disadvantages of the current inclusion of "regulatory significance" as a component of "safety significance," and report on the results of its review in conjunction with its report on the development of a definition of "regulatory concern" or "regulatory significance." This review should be directed toward increasing the clarity of terms used and their applicability. Regulatory significance should continue to be a factor in determining the severity level of a violation in conformity with the Enforcement Policy, whether or not it is considered to be a part of safety significance. Furthermore, regulatory significance should be understood and applied in a manner consistent with the Commission guidance to the staff on safety and compliance.

(EDO)

(SECY Suspense: 10/23/98)

3. In determining whether a violation is a "minor violation," the Enforcement Manual poses a series of questions. The question "If a violation recurred, would its recurrence be a more significant concern?" should be deleted. Also, in Section 3.5.c, "programmatic deficiencies" should be substituted for "programmatic weaknesses."
4. Recommendation #2 should be supplemented to include direction that the staff should provide for Commission consideration, in proposed and final rulemaking packages wherever relevant, either proposed guidance or a synopsis of the planned means of inspection and enforcement. For cases in which inspection and enforcement guidance would be irrelevant or unnecessary, the staff should include a statement to that effect.
5. On page 91 of the proposed Federal Register notice in the last bullet, and on page 43 of the comparative text, in line 2, delete 'wherever.'

cc: Chairman Jackson  
Commissioner Dicus  
Commissioner Diaz

Commissioner McGaffigan  
OGC  
CIO  
CFO  
OCA  
OIG  
Office Directors, Regions, ACRS, ACNW, ASLBP (via E-Mail)  
PDR  
DCS

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SECY NOTE: SECY-97-295 WAS RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC ON APRIL 10, 1998. THIS SRM WILL BE MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE UPON ISSUANCE.