

April 8, 2004

MEMORANDUM TO: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Annette L. Vietti-Cook, Secretary /**RA by J. Samuel Walker Acting For**/

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - BRIEFING ON OFFICE OF REACTOR REGULATION (NRR) PROGRAMS, PERFORMANCE, AND PLANS, 9:30 A.M., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2004, COMMISSIONERS' CONFERENCE ROOM, ONE WHITE FLINT NORTH, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND (OPEN TO PUBLIC ATTENDANCE)

The Commission was briefed by the NRC staff on the status of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) programs, performance, and plans. The Commission commended the staff for their many accomplishments. The Commission encouraged the staff to bring technical issues, such as the remaining fire protection issues, to closure in a timely and effective manner. The Commission also expressed interest in and support of the staff's ability to adapt to developments in the new reactor area given the uncertainty in the plans for utilization of new reactor technology.

The Commission supports continued evaluation of enhancements to the Performance Indicator Program as a normal part of the Reactor Oversight Process. The Commission believes that resource considerations alone should not prevent a transition to a more risk-informed basis for the reactor oversight process. The staff should continue its effort to evaluate the use of a risk-informed performance indicator to replace the Safety System Unavailability (SSU) Performance Indicator (PI) in a timely manner. The staff should consider creative and practical approaches to achieve the intended purpose of this effort, including removing the "front stop" discussed during the briefing. The staff should also address lessons learned from the Mitigating Systems PI pilot. The Commission encourages the continued involvement of all stakeholders in this effort. The staff should address this issue in the Commission meeting regarding the Agency Action Review Meeting.

The Commission welcomed the staff's creation of a joint NRR and Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR) working group to review the safety-security interface. The working group should review NRR and NSIR processes, including licensing amendments and the 10CFR50.59 process, to ensure safety and security implications are appropriately addressed.

cc: Chairman Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
OGC
CFO
OCA
OIG
OPA
Office Directors, Regions, ACRS, ACNW, ASLBP (via E-Mail)
PDR