

May 10, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR: Luis A. Reyes  
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: Annette L. Vietti-Cook, Secretary **/RA/**

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - BRIEFING ON STATUS OF NEW SITE AND REACTOR LICENSING, 9:30 A.M.,  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2005, 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 new site and reactor licensing. The following items were identified for staff action:

1. The staff should engage the Nuclear Energy Institute and potential applicants to establish better estimates for potential new reactor deployment (e.g., in order to develop realistic schedule models and resource estimates). The Congress should be kept informed about new reactor activities and the impact on the NRC budget. In accordance with Commission policy to support design certification reviews before a construction permit or combined license (COL) has been filed, the staff should plan on developing budget estimates to conduct all pre-application reviews, design certification reviews, early site permit reviews, and COL reviews which are reasonably expected to be submitted in FY2007 or beyond (i.e., where the uncertainty associated with receiving the request for review is low to medium). However, when it comes time to execute the budget in FY2007 and beyond, the staff should give priority to applications that are aligned with a COL partner, and assign a lower priority to applications that are not clearly aligned with a COL partner, if funding is not approved to review all applications. This practice will improve the reliability of our budget process and the discharge of both our licensing and regulatory oversight obligations.
2. The Office of the Secretary, using the Commission agenda planning process, will schedule another meeting on this topic for the November 2005 timeframe. The meeting should focus primarily on the role of inspections, tests, analyses, and acceptance criteria (ITAAC) and on the status of the new construction inspection program (CIP).
3. In light of the impending retirement of key senior staff over the next few years, applicable sections of the Standard Review Plan (NUREG 0800), other guidance documents, and office procedures need to be revised in a timely manner, to ensure up-to-date guidance is available for the next generation of staff that will be responsible for reviewing and licensing new sites and new reactors. NRR should develop an integrated and continuing plan for updating licensing review guidance and provide the plan, along with a schedule for completion, to the Commission. The staff should prioritize the list of guidance documents that need revision, and focus on updating the most critical items first.

(EDO)

(SECY Suspense:

12/30/05)

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