

June 29, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director for Operations

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

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - BRIEFING ON STATUS OF EMERGENCY PLANNING ACTIVITIES, (TWO SESSIONS) 9:30 A.M. AND 1:00 P.M., TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2006, COMMISSIONERS' CONFERENCE ROOM, ONE WHITE FLINT NORTH, ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND (OPEN TO PUBLIC ATTENDANCE)

The Commission was briefed in the morning session by the NRC staff and Dan Wilcox, Deputy Branch Chief, Radiological Emergency Preparedness Branch, Chemical and Nuclear Preparedness and Protection Division, Office of Infrastructure Protection, Preparedness Directorate, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the status of emergency planning activities at nuclear power plants (NPP). In the afternoon session, the Commission was briefed by stakeholders Aubrey Godwin, Director, Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency; Michael Rose, Emergency and Support Services Manager, City of Dana Point, California, and Chair, Inter-Jurisdictional Planning Committee for the San Onofre NGS; Paul Gunter, Director, Reactor Watchdog Project, Nuclear Information & Resource Service; and David Christian, Senior Vice President - Nuclear, Dominion Generation, and Head, NEI Working Group on Emergency Planning.

The state of emergency planning implementation remains at a high level. This briefing was held in the context of the NRC's ongoing review of Radiological Emergency Preparedness regulations and guidance and the Commission made clear the importance it places on this subject. The staff should continue to seek to identify additional improvements in NRC guidance for emergency preparedness. Therefore, as part of that review, the staff should carefully evaluate the effectiveness of command, control, and communication and the contribution these elements make toward an integrated on-site/off-site emergency plan.

Because of the important role evacuation time estimates (ETEs) play in informing protective action recommendations, the staff should evaluate potential improvements to the methodology and update periodicity for these, particularly for the 2-mile EPZ subzones and the 5-mile keyholes used in most States' emergency planning documents.

The staff should stay well informed of alert notification systems (ANS) technology advancements and innovative industry use of these systems and share with stakeholders the potential use of these systems to alert the public.

Upon completion of the protective action recommendation (PAR) improvement study being performed by Sandia National Laboratories, any associated staff recommendations for changing the PAR guidelines should receive ACRS review prior to being sent to the Commission.

The staff should continue to work on outreach with stakeholders, licensees, and the public to inform the review of emergency preparedness and to communicate activities and initiatives. Within these outreach activities, the staff should support, as appropriate, State and local officials and DHS to effectively communicate the benefits of NPP emergency planning for all hazards emergency planning. Outreach efforts should also continue to include State and local officials and first responders and plans for communicating appropriate emergency action messages.

Special attention should be made to supporting, as appropriate, State and local officials and DHS in informing the public on when sheltering in place may be more protective.

High level State and local officials should be invited to participate in emergency planning exercises and observe these exercises from the NRC perspective.

The staff should coordinate with DHS to develop emergency planning exercise scenarios which would help avoid anticipatory responses associated with preconditioning of participants by incorporating a wide spectrum of releases (ranging from little or no release to a large release) and events, including security-based events. These scenarios should emphasize the expected interfaces and coordination between key decision-makers based on realistic postulated events. The staff should share experiences of preconditioning or "negative training" with DHS.

The staff should continue to coordinate with DHS as the roles and responsibilities of the Preparedness Directorate and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) evolve. The staff should work closely with DHS in the preparation of guidance addressing how emergency preparedness requirements will be evaluated, and keep the Commission informed of progress in developing memoranda of understanding with DHS that will strengthen emergency planning response and coordination.

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