

December 1, 2004

The Honorable George V. Voinovich, Chairman
Subcommittee on Clean Air, Climate Change,
and Nuclear Safety
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, House Report 108-212 and Senate Report 108-105, directed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to continue to provide a monthly report on the status of its licensing and regulatory duties. The initial reporting requirement arose in the FY 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, Senate Report 105-206. On behalf of the Commission, I am pleased to transmit the seventy-first report, which covers the month of October 2004. I am also providing more recent information in this cover letter in order to keep you fully and currently informed of NRC's licensing and regulatory activities.

The previous report provided information on a number of significant activities. These activities included the following: (1) the NRC initiated an additional security review of publicly available documents to ensure that potentially sensitive information is removed from the agency's Web site; (2) the delay in NRC's review of Entergy Nuclear Generation Company's application for a 20 percent power uprate at Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station due to insufficient information provided by the licensee; and (3) a six-month update on the status of the Davis-Besse nuclear plant, including a summary of the results of NRC's preliminary risk analysis of the combined safety issues at the plant that existed during the year before the reactor vessel head degradation was discovered.

Since the previous report, on November 3, NRC restored references to the staff's document collection in its electronic Licensing Support Network for a possible application for a high-level waste repository. Documents from other potential parties to a Yucca Mountain hearing remained available. High-level waste documents on the electronic hearing docket have also been restored for public access. On November 16, the agency restored public access to additional documents pertaining to reactor-related matters and two nuclear materials cases in the agency's Electronic Hearing Docket. Time sensitive documents related to opportunities for hearings or needed for public review and comment on regulatory matters such as license amendment applications have been made available via the NRC Public Document Room. The NRC expects to restore public access to additional documents on nuclear reactors and other documents not related to specific facilities in early December, after security reviews are completed. Public access to additional non-reactor documents (i.e., documents related to nuclear materials licenses) will be restored later, after document reviews are completed.

On October 29, 2004, the NRC completed its review and approved the security plans for all power reactors and Category I fuel cycle facilities. All of these facilities have implemented significant security enhancements for defending against the design basis threat (DBT).

The NRC staff recently postponed two public meetings involving issues at the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station originally set for November 9, 2004: a meeting to present to Entergy (the licensee) the preliminary results of NRC's Special Inspection regarding two spent fuel rod pieces that were misplaced in the Vermont Yankee spent fuel pool, and a meeting to discuss the preliminary findings of the NRC's Engineering Team Inspection at Vermont Yankee. The meetings were scheduled to be held at a local school to allow the public to provide comments and ask questions. However, on November 4, local authorities withdrew the offer to hold the meetings at the school because of the surprisingly large number of people who expressed an interest in attending. The NRC has been working with local, state, and Federal officials and has identified a suitable location and forum for a future meeting tentatively scheduled for December 16, 2004.

The Commission issued a final rule, 10 CFR 50.69. The new regulation is voluntary and incorporates up-to-date analytic tools and risk insights to enhance plant safety by enabling nuclear power plant licensees to more precisely determine the safety significance of structures, systems, and components (SSCs) and treat the SSCs in a manner commensurate with their safety significance. If licensees adopt the change, some SSCs of "low safety significance" would be subject to less stringent requirements than currently exist, although they must remain capable of performing their safety-related functions. Conversely, some SSCs of greater significance would be subject to new requirements. This rule enables both nuclear power plant licensees and the NRC to focus resources more efficiently on issues of greater safety significance.

Recently, the Commission, or in some cases the NRC staff, also accomplished the following:

- issued a notice in the Federal Register, on November 1, 2004, to solicit comments from members of the public, licensees, and interest groups related to the implementation of the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP). This solicitation will provide insights into the self-assessment process. The comment period expires on December 16, 2004.
- conducted the third quarterly management meeting with Louisiana Energy Services (LES) on October 21, 2004, to discuss management issues related to the uranium enrichment facility proposed to be located in Eunice, New Mexico. Issues discussed included the status of the licensing review and environmental impact statement preparation and open technical issues.
- conducted a meeting with the public on October 14, 2004, in Eunice, New Mexico, to take comments on the LES uranium enrichment facility Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which was published in September 2004. Approximately 150 people, most of whom strongly supported the project, attended the public meeting. Comments made included the need to consider Lea County's 40-year water resources plan, disposition of depleted uranium tails, decommissioning funding, and positive socioeconomic impacts.

- issued NRC order CLI-04-30 on October 7, 2004, accepting for detailed technical review the USEC Inc. license application and environmental report, initiating the USEC Inc. hearing proceeding. The order included a 30-month milestone schedule for NRC review and final decision. In late October, NRC performed an in-office review of USEC Inc.'s Integrated Safety Analysis (ISA). By letter dated August 23, 2004, USEC Inc. submitted to NRC its license application and ISA Summary for construction and operation of the American Centrifuge Plant, a gas centrifuge uranium enrichment facility, at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant located in Piketon, Ohio.
- issued, on November 9, 2004, a general license to Exelon Generation Company (Exelon) authorizing storage of spent fuel in an independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) at the Quad Cities Nuclear Power Station. Exelon has identified near-term plans to store spent fuel in an ISFSI under the general license provisions of 10 CFR part 72.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz

Enclosure:
Monthly Report

cc: Senator Thomas R. Carper

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable George V. Voinovich, Chairman
Subcommittee on Clean Air, Climate Change,
and Nuclear Safety
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Thomas R. Carper

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Rick Boucher

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator Harry Reid

The Honorable David L. Hobson, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
cc: Representative Peter Visclosky

The Honorable James M. Inhofe, Chairman
Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
cc: Senator James Jeffords

The Honorable Joe Barton, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515
cc: Representative John D. Dingell

MONTHLY STATUS REPORT ON THE
LICENSING ACTIVITIES AND REGULATORY DUTIES OF THE
UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

OCTOBER 2004

Enclosure

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¹Note: The period of performance covered by this report includes activities occurring between the first and last day of October 2004. The transmittal letter to Congress accompanying this report may provide more recent information in order to keep Congress fully and currently informed of NRC's licensing and regulatory activities.

I Implementing Risk-Informed Regulations

The staff continues to make progress on tasks involving the use of probabilistic risk information in many areas; however, there were no reportable milestones scheduled or completed during the month of October 2004.

II Revised Reactor Oversight Process

The NRC continues to implement the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) at all nuclear power plants. The NRC continues to meet with interested stakeholders on a periodic basis to collect feedback on the efficacy of the process and consider the feedback in future ROP refinements. Recent activities include the following:

- On October 13, 2004, NRC staff hosted an ROP public meeting at the NRC Headquarters office. The following major topics were discussed during the meeting: (1) updates on activities to improve Significance Determination Process (SDP) timeliness as well as a discussion on draft aspects of the Maintenance Rule SDP, (2) a general update on security-related ROP initiatives, (3) an update by the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) on their analysis of the Safety Systems Functional Failure Performance Indicator (PI), (4) staff/industry task force updates on the Scrams w/loss of Normal Heat Removal and Barrier Integrity PIs, (5) NUMARC 93-01 Maintenance Rule Unavailability Monitoring in Shutdown Changes, and (6) new and open PI Frequently Asked Questions. Meeting participants included industry representatives, NEI, and the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO).
- On October 14, 2004, NRC staff hosted the monthly public meeting on the Mitigating Systems Performance Index (MSPI) at the NRC Headquarters office. The following major topics were discussed during the meeting: (1) updates of the MSPI Probabilistic Risk Assessment task force charter issues, (2) discussion of draft documents for MSPI implementation, and (3) a timeline of future MSPI implementation milestones. Meeting participants included industry representatives, NEI, and INPO.

III Status of Issues in the Reactor Generic Issue Program

Resolution of the issues in the Reactor Generic Issue Program continues to be on track in accordance with the schedules previously submitted.

Generic Safety Issue 80, "Pipe Break Effects on Control Rod Drive Hydraulic Lines in the Drywells of Boiling Water Reactor MARK I and II Containments," addresses a concern regarding the likelihood and potential effects of a loss of coolant accident, which could cause interactions with the control rod drive (CRD) hydraulic lines in a manner that could prevent rod insertion and create the potential for recriticality when the reactor core is reflooded. A technical analysis of the effects of postulated pipe breaks inside boiling-water reactor (BWR) Mark I and Mark II containments was completed in July 2004. A finite element code was used to perform a nonlinear transient analysis to determine the impact of pipe break impulsive loads on drywell steel shell and CRD bundles. The results of the analysis indicated that the CRD bundles will

not be impacted by breaks in recirculation, steam, and feedwater system piping after a postulated break. The staff is preparing a report on its findings for review by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards. Completion of this issue is scheduled for June 2005.

Generic Safety Issue 188, "Steam Generator Tube Leaks/Ruptures Concurrent with Containment Bypass," addresses the effects of resonance vibrations on the validity of steam generator tube leak and rupture analyses during steam line break depressurization. In July 2004, a draft study was completed which showed that, even if a few percent of steam generator tubes are locked to the tube support plates by crevice deposits or corrosion products, the dynamic loads associated with a main steam line break will have little impact on the integrity of the tubes, unless extensive circumferential cracking is present. This study will be issued by the staff as a NUREG report, and the issue is scheduled to be closed in June 2005.

A discussion of NRC's Generic Issue Program is available at <http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/gen-issues.html>.

IV Licensing Actions and Other Licensing Tasks

Operating power reactor licensing actions are defined as orders, license amendments, exemptions from regulations, relief from inspection or surveillance requirements, topical reports submitted on a plant-specific basis, notices of enforcement discretion, or other actions requiring NRC review and approval before they can be implemented by licensees. The FY 2005 NRC Performance Plan incorporates three output measures related to licensing actions -- number of licensing action completions per year, age of the licensing action inventory, and size of licensing action inventory.

Other licensing tasks for operating power reactors are defined as licensee responses to NRC requests for information through generic letters or bulletins, NRC responses to 2.206 petitions, NRC review of generic topical reports, responses by the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation to regional requests for assistance, NRC review of licensee 10 CFR 50.59 analyses and FSAR updates, or other licensee requests not requiring NRC review and approval before they can be implemented by licensees. The FY 2005 NRC Performance Plan incorporates one output measure related to other licensing tasks -- number of other licensing tasks completed.

In FY 2004, several high priority activities, such as power grid reliability, changes to nuclear facility security plans, safeguards contingency plans, and guard force training and qualification plans, resulted in the NRC reprogramming resources to accommodate the additional work. One of the programs affected by the reprogramming of resources was operating power reactor licensing actions. As a result, at the end of FY 2004, the size of the licensing action inventory exceeded the goal of ≤ 1000 and the goal of having at least 96 percent of the licensing action applications less than or equal to one year old was not met. The effects of the reprogramming will continue into FYs 2005 and 2006. A plan has been put forth that proposes to modify the inventory and one year timeliness goals for FY 2005 and to provide additional resources in FY 2006. These resources will be used to work down the inventory and improve timeliness such that the original timeliness and inventory goals can be met in FY 2006.

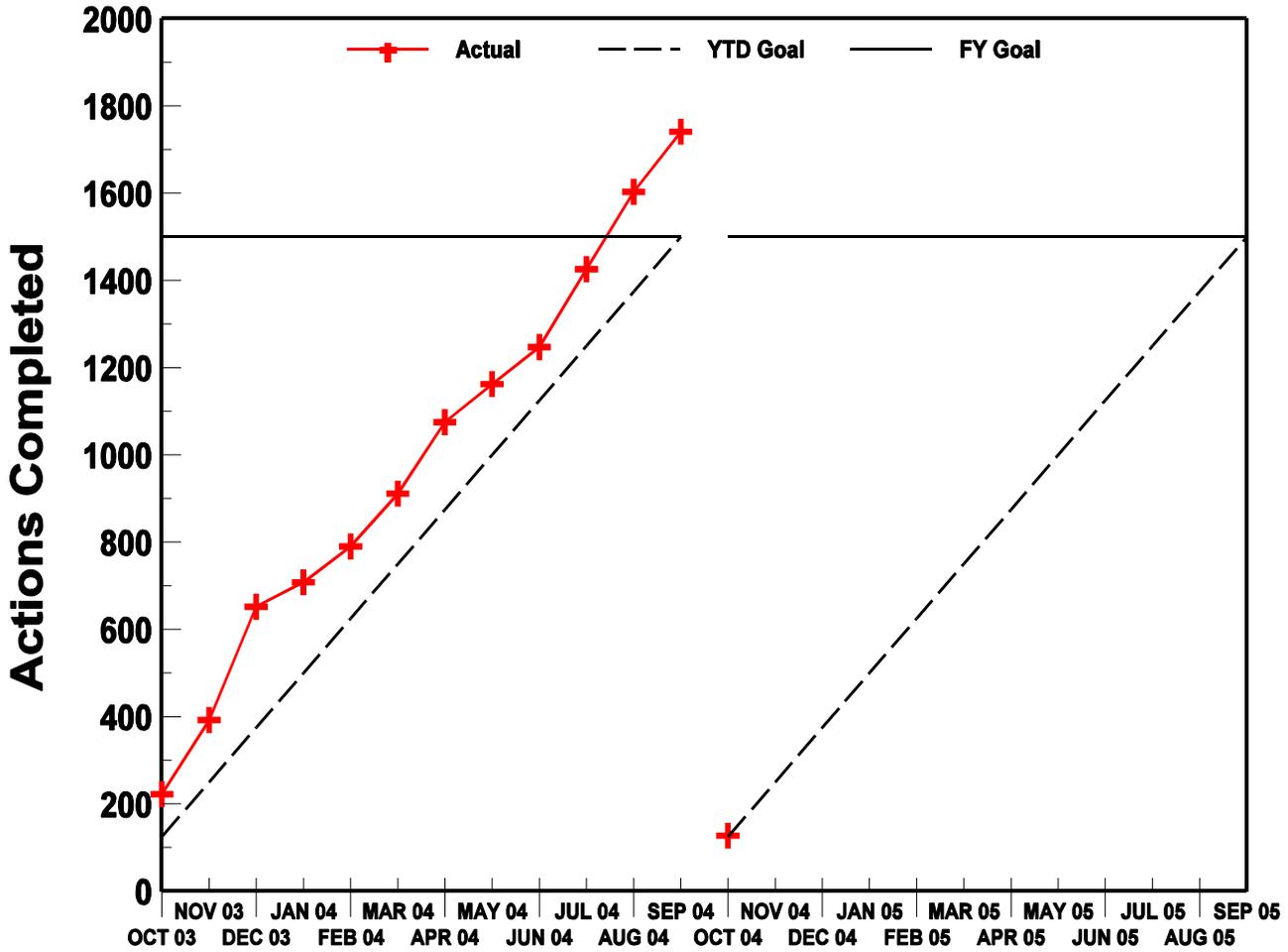
The actual FY 2003 and FY 2004 results, the FY 2005 goals, and the actual FY 2005 results, as of October 31, 2004, for the four NRC Performance Plan output measures for operating power reactor licensing actions and other licensing tasks are shown in the table below:

PERFORMANCE PLAN				
Output Measure	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Goals	FY 2005 Actual (thru 10/31/2004)
Licensing actions completed/year	1774	1741	≥ 1500	127
Age of licensing action inventory	96% ≤ 1 year; and 100% ≤ 2 years	91% ≤ 1 year; and 100% ≤ 2 years	90% ≤ 1 year and 100% ≤ 2 years	89% ≤ 1 year; 100% ≤ 2 years
Size of licensing action inventory	1296	1135	≤ 1200	1159
Other licensing tasks completed/year	500	671	≥ 500	24

The following charts demonstrate NRC's FY 2005 trends for the four operating power reactor licensing action and other licensing task output measure goals:

Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reactor Licensing

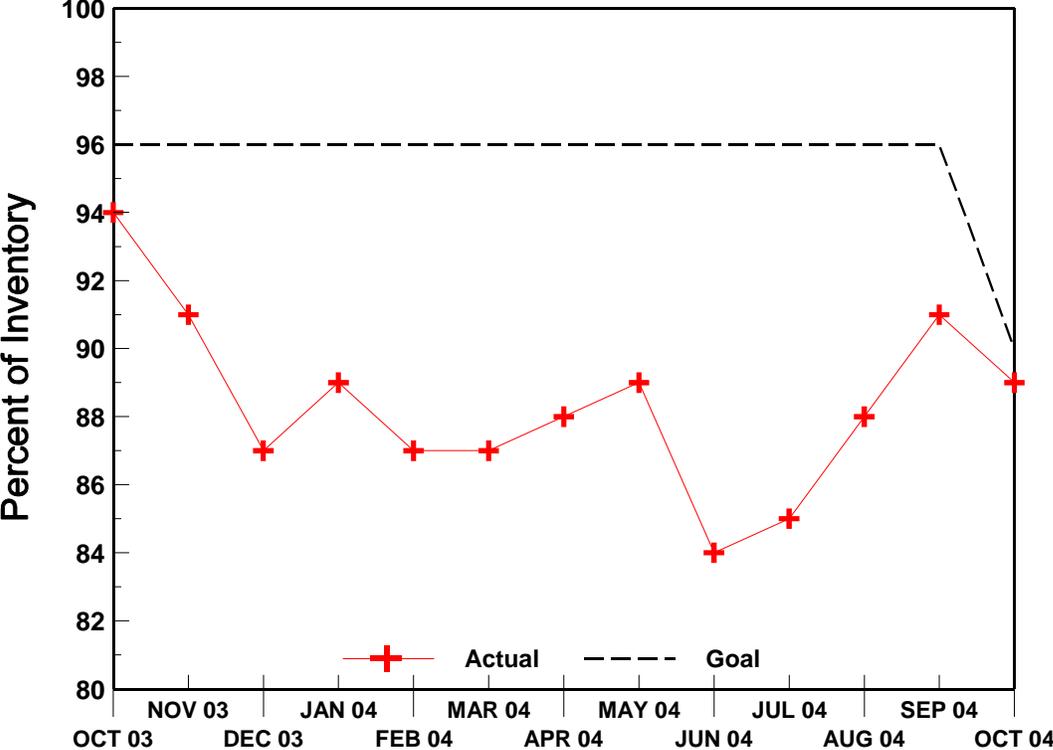
Performance Plan Target: Completed Licensing Actions



Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reactor Licensing

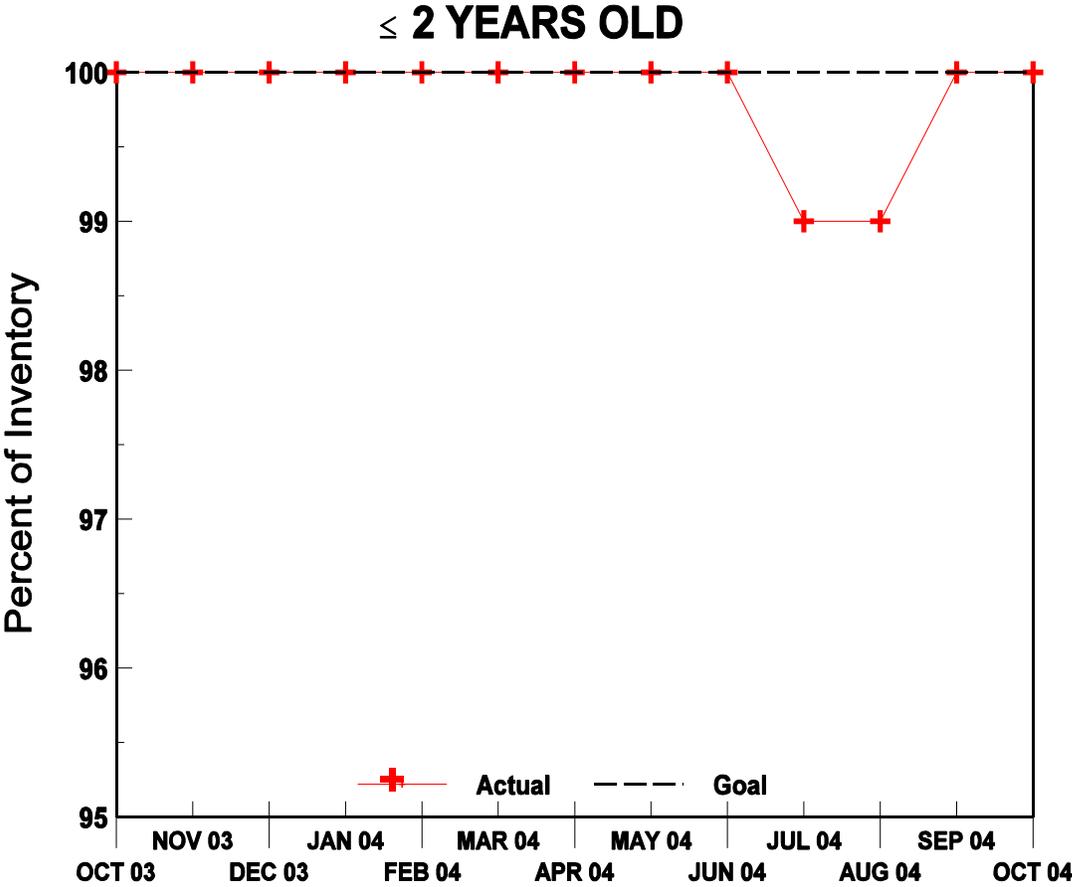
Performance Plan Target: Age of Licensing Action Inventory

≤ 1 YEAR OLD



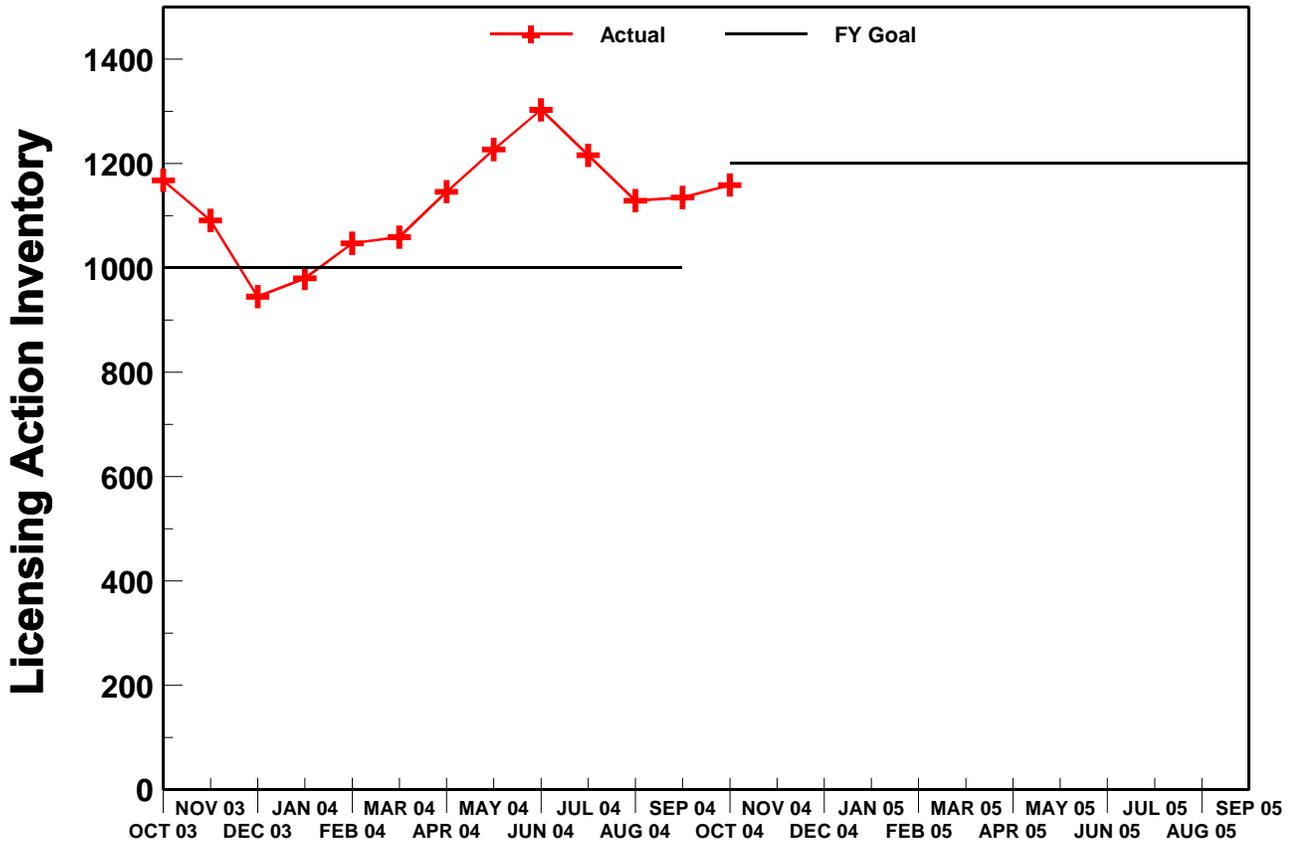
Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reactor Licensing

Performance Plan Target: Age of Licensing Action Inventory



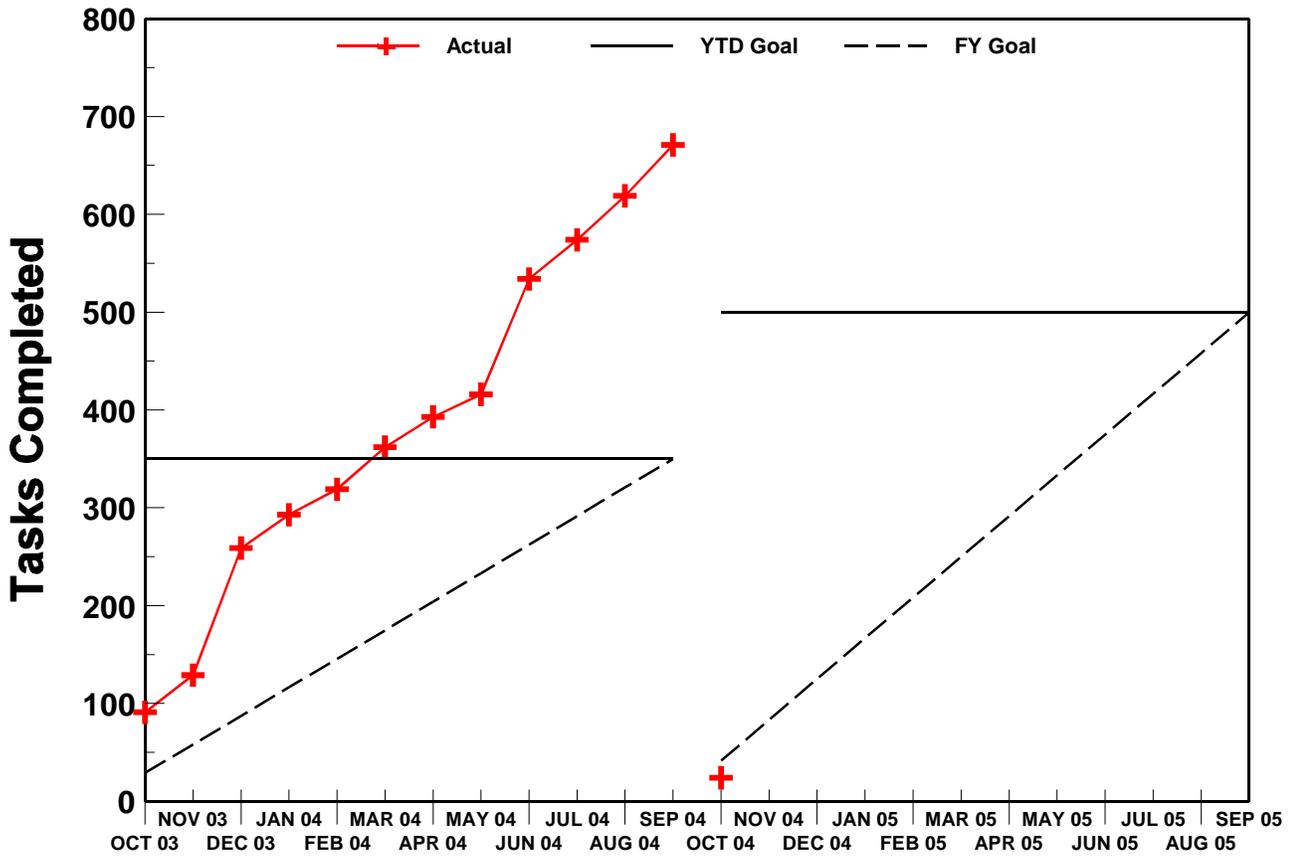
Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reactor Licensing

Performance Plan: Size of Licensing Action Inventory



Nuclear Reactor Safety - Reactor Licensing

Performance Plan Target: Completed Other Licensing Tasks



V Status of License Renewal Activities

Dresden, Units 2 and 3, and Quad Cities, Units 1 and 2, Combined License Renewal Application

The renewed licenses for Dresden, Units 2 and 3, and Quad Cities, Units 1 and 2, were issued on October 28, 2004, completing the review of the license renewal application (22 months after receipt).

Farley, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The Farley license renewal application is currently under review. The draft supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) was issued for public comment in August 2004, and the comment period ends in November 2004. The safety evaluation report, identifying any remaining open items, was issued in October 2004, and the applicant's comments on the report are due in December 2004.

Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 2, License Renewal Application

The Arkansas Unit 2 license renewal application is currently under review. The draft SEIS was issued for public comment in August 2004, and the comment period ends in November 2004. The safety evaluation report, identifying any remaining open items, is scheduled to be issued in November 2004.

Cook, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The Cook license renewal application is currently under review. The draft SEIS was issued for public comment in September 2004, and the comment period ends in December 2004. The safety evaluation report, identifying any remaining open items, is scheduled to be issued in December 2004.

Browns Ferry, Units 1, 2, and 3, License Renewal Application

The Browns Ferry license renewal application is currently under review. The draft SEIS is scheduled to be issued for public comment in December 2004, and the safety evaluation report, identifying any remaining open items, is scheduled to be issued in August 2005.

Millstone, Units 2 and 3, License Renewal Application

The Millstone license renewal application is currently under review, and the staff is preparing requests for additional information. The draft SEIS is scheduled to be issued for public comment in December 2004, and the safety evaluation report, identifying any remaining open items, is scheduled to be issued in February 2005. A request for hearing was received in response to the NRC's notice of opportunity for hearing, and an Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) was established. The ASLB found that none of the petitioner's contentions satisfied the requirements to be admissible for litigation and denied the petition for hearing. The petitioner's motion for reconsideration was denied by the ASLB, and an appeal of the hearing denial is pending with the Commission.

Point Beach, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The Point Beach license renewal application is currently under review, and the staff is preparing requests for additional information. The draft SEIS is scheduled to be issued in January 2005, and the safety evaluation report, identifying any remaining open items, in May 2005.

Nine Mile Point, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

The Nine Mile Point license renewal application is currently under review, and the staff is preparing requests for additional information. The draft SEIS is scheduled to be issued in April 2005, and the safety evaluation report, identifying any remaining open items, is scheduled to be issued in June 2005.

Brunswick, Units 1 and 2, License Renewal Application

On October 20, 2004, the NRC received an application for renewal of the operating licenses for Brunswick, Units 1 and 2. The staff is currently performing the required acceptance review of the application. If the application is found acceptable, the staff will docket the application, notice an opportunity for hearing, and issue the review schedule.

VI Status of Review of Private Fuel Storage, Limited Liability Corporation's Application for a License to Operate an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation on the Reservation of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians

Litigation continues on the application by Private Fuel Storage, L.L.C. (PFS) for a license to construct and operate an independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) on the Reservation of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Indians in Skull Valley, Utah. As noted in previous monthly updates, one issue concerning the consequences of an F16 aircraft crash accident at the proposed facility remains in litigation before the ASLB.

During this reporting period, the parties filed proposed findings of fact and conclusions with the ASLB on aircraft crash consequence issues. The parties are scheduled to file reply findings of fact in November 2004. The ASLB will likely issue its decision on crash consequences no later than January 2005.

The Commission currently has under consideration certain matters raised on appeal from prior ASLB decisions. These involve State of Utah's petition for review of the ASLB's rulings on the redaction of proprietary information from the Licensing Board's decisions on financial assurance.

VII Enforcement Process and Summary of Reactor Enforcement by Region

Reactor Enforcement by Region

Reactor Enforcement Actions*						
		Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	TOTAL
Severity Level I	Oct 2004	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 05 Total	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 04 Total	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 03 Total	0	0	0	0	0
Severity Level II	Oct 2004	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 05 Total	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 04 Total	0	1	0	0	1
	FY 03 Total	0	0	0	0	0
Severity Level III	Oct 2004	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 05 Total	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 04 Total	1	2	4	0	7
	FY 03 Total	2	0	4	0	6
Severity Level IV or Green	Oct 2004	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 05 Total	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 04 Total	1	0	2	2	5
	FY 03 Total	1	0	2	1	4
Non-Cited Severity Level IV or Green	Oct 2004	4	43	47	11	105
	FY 05 Total	4	43	47	11	105
	FY 04 Total	271	175	290	301	1037
	FY 03 Total	211	164	253	184	812

* Numbers of violations are based on enforcement action tracking system (EATS) data that may be subject to minor changes following verification. The numbers shown as Severity Level I, II, III or IV refer to the number of Severity Level I, II, III, and IV violations or problems. The monthly totals generally lag by 30 days due to inspection report and enforcement development.

Escalated Reactor Enforcement Actions Associated with the Reactor Oversight Process						
		Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Total
Notices of Violation Related to White, Yellow or Red Findings	Oct 04 Red	0	0	0	0	0
	Oct 04 Yellow	0	0	0	0	0
	Oct 04 White	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 05 Total	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 04 Total	3	4	7	5	19
	FY 03 Total	6	1	7	1	15

Description of Significant Actions taken in October 2004*

None taken.

VIII Power Reactor Security Regulations

In response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the NRC and the nuclear industry have taken many actions to ensure the security at nuclear power plants. A series of Advisories, Orders, and Regulatory Issue Summaries have been issued to strengthen further the security of NRC-licensed facilities and control of nuclear materials.

Orders were issued on April 29, 2003, to revise the threat against which individual power reactor licensees and category I fuel cycle facilities must be able to defend (design basis threat [DBT]), limit the number of hours that security personnel can work, and enhance training and qualification requirements for security personnel. All licensees implemented the Orders by October 29, 2004. Implementation of these Orders included employing revised security plans, revised safeguards contingency plans, and revised guard training and qualification plans, and completing any necessary plant modifications. The NRC staff endorsed appropriate implementing guidance and provided it to the industry so plant and program changes could be completed on schedule. All licensees submitted the required plans by the April 29, 2004, scheduled date. The security plan reviews and appropriate licensing and inspection activities were completed by October 29, 2004.

Orders were issued on October 23, 2003, to all nuclear reactor licensees and research reactor licensees that transport spent nuclear fuel. The licensees subject to the Order have been issued a specific license by NRC authorizing the possession of spent nuclear fuel and a general license authorizing the transportation of spent nuclear fuel in a transport package approved by the Commission in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and 10 CFR Parts 50 and 71.

*Security related enforcement actions are not included in the statistics in the above Tables or in the Description of Significant Action due to the sensitive nature of security findings.

In March 2003, the NRC initiated a pilot program for full force-on-force exercises, which used expanded adversary characteristics that were developed as a result of the increased post 9/11 threat. The purpose of the force-on-force exercises is to assess and improve, as necessary, performance of defensive strategies at licensed facilities. Pilot force-on-force exercises were completed at fifteen plants in 2003. The staff provided a paper to the Commission summarizing lessons learned from the force-on-force pilot program and how these lessons could be factored into the full implementation of the force-on-force program. The Commission approved enhanced force-on-force testing, and sixteen transitional force-on-force tests were conducted through October 2004. Beginning in November 2004, the NRC will implement triennial force-on-force testing at each nuclear power plant site.

To enhance the realism and effectiveness of the force-on-force exercises, the NRC has established fitness and training standards for mock adversary force personnel. Application of these standards will provide assurance that the mock adversary force has received appropriate training in offensive tactics and is a credible and challenging adversary. The NRC retains responsibility for oversight of the mock adversary force and evaluation of licensee performance. In addition, measures have been established to minimize any possibility for a conflict of interest with respect to responsibilities for physical protection.

During 2003, the staff suspended the physical protection portion of the baseline inspections in the Reactor Oversight Process. Instead, NRC inspections in the reactor security area were focused on licensee implementation of compensatory measures to address the post-9/11 threat environment. These compensatory measures were required by the Commission's February 25, 2002 Order. In late 2003, the staff developed a revised baseline inspection program for reactor security, taking into consideration the enhanced requirements and the higher threat environment. The staff began implementation of the revised baseline inspection program during the first week of March 2004. Until the DBT Orders were fully implemented, the inspections focused on those elements of the program that had been fully implemented under previous orders, such as access authorization and security force work hour limits. During FY 2005, inspection efforts will focus on verifying implementation of the DBT. Implementation of all elements of the baseline inspection program will commence in 2006.

IX Power Upgrades

The staff has assigned power upgrade license amendment reviews a high priority. The staff considers power upgrade applications among the most significant licensing actions and is therefore conducting power upgrade reviews on accelerated schedules.

There are three types of power upgrades. Measurement uncertainty recapture (MUR) power upgrades are power upgrades of less than 2 percent and are based on the use of more accurate feedwater flow measurement techniques. Stretch power upgrades are power upgrades that are typically on the order of less than 7 percent and are within the design capacity of the plant. Stretch power upgrades require only minor plant modification. Extended power upgrades (EPUs) are power upgrades beyond the design capacity of the plant and, thus, require major plant modification.

Licensees have been applying for and implementing power upgrades since the 1970s as a way to increase the power output of their plants. The staff has been conducting power upgrade reviews

since then, and to date, has completed 102 such reviews. Approximately 12,650 megawatts-thermal (4217 megawatts-electric) or an equivalent of about four nuclear power plant units has been gained through implementation of power uprates at existing plants. The staff currently has 11 plant-specific power uprate applications under review. The 11 applications under review include 4 stretch power uprates and 7 EPU. Indian Point Unit 2 stretch power uprate of 3.26% was issued October 28, 2004.

On September 10, 2003, Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. submitted a request for an EPU at its Vermont Yankee (VY) plant in Brattleboro, Vermont. In a letter dated October 15, 2004, the NRC informed Entergy that the original forecast review completion date of January 31, 2005, will be delayed by at least several months primarily due to concerns regarding the steam dryer analysis. On October 21 and 22, 2004, the NRC's ASLB heard oral arguments, in Brattleboro Vermont, from the Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS), the New England Coalition (NEC), Entergy, and the NRC, concerning hearing requests filed by the DPS and the NEC related to the proposed VY EPU. The ASLB is currently evaluating if any of the contentions are admissible consistent with the NRC's regulations pertaining to hearing requests. A hearing would be held if the ASLB determines that any of the contentions are admissible.

The staff is continuing its efforts related to dryer cracking and other flow-induced vibration issues that have occurred at Exelon's Quad Cities and Dresden plants following implementation of EPU. NRC staff met with Exelon on October 19 and 25, 2004, and discussed new steam dryer instrumentation, the licensee's flow-induced vibration analyses pertaining to steam dryers and other components, and Exelon's extent of condition review of EPU flow induced vibrations issues. The staff continues to evaluate the licensee's analyses in this area, and future meetings with Exelon are scheduled.

In July 2004, the staff completed a survey of nuclear power plant licensees to obtain information regarding industry's plans related to power uprate applications. Based on this survey, licensees plan to submit power uprate applications for 16 nuclear power plant units in the next 5 years. These include 7 MUR power uprates, 1 stretch power uprate, and 8 EPU. Planned power uprates are expected to result in an increase of about 2419 megawatts-thermal (806 megawatts-electric).

X Status of the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station

Interim reports to be provided in March 2005, September 2005, and March 2006.