



NRC NEWS

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U.S., U.K. Nuclear Regulators Renew, Expand Cooperation to Speed Advanced Reactor Technical Reviews

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the United Kingdom's Office for Nuclear Regulation renewed their Memorandum of Understanding to cooperate and exchange technical information on September 15, 2025, reaffirming a shared commitment to regulatory excellence that will enable the safe, efficient and accelerated deployment of next generation nuclear technologies.

The memorandum continues and expands upon a U.S.-U.K. regulatory collaboration that has existed since 1975.

"Through this agreement, we are taking our longstanding partnership to the next level and redoubling our joint efforts to advance, enable, and deploy nuclear technologies for the future," said **NRC Chairman David A. Wright**. "Leveraging each other's technical expertise and judgements will help us to streamline regulation while maintaining safety, supporting the whole-of-government effort to modernize our regulatory and licensing processes, enable innovation and protect public health and safety. In paving the way for timely deployment of advanced nuclear technologies, this partnership is positioned to lead the world in advancing the state of the industry."

"The opportunities presented through the refreshed Memorandum of Understanding, and new collaborative way of working outlined in the partnership agreement, clearly reaffirm our shared commitment to effective, safe and secure nuclear operations," said **ONR Chief Executive and Chief Nuclear Inspector Michael Finnerty**. "We have had a strong relationship with U.S. counterparts for many years, and we look forward to developing greater collaboration to optimize the collective regulatory efforts in the best interests of our two nations. We will also continue to work with industry, through routes such as our early engagement framework to enhance early understanding of regulatory expectations, further enabling timely deployment."

The NRC-ONR agreement complements a Memorandum of Understanding between the NRC and the Environment Agency of England, signed in 2024. "The Environment Agency supports clean energy generation that is safe, secure, and protects the environment, including nuclear power. This agreement provides the critical opportunity to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness of our reactor design assessments," said **Environment Agency Chief Executive Philip Duffy**. "We look forward to working more closely with our colleagues in the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Office for Nuclear Regulation, building on our existing Memorandums of Understanding."

Together, the NRC, ONR, and EA will collaborate to:

- **Cut duplication and fast-track decisions:** Targeting reactor design reviews within two years and nuclear site licensing within one year, and accelerating site permitting.
- **Share the regulatory load:** Regulators will lead on specific aspects of reviews and mutually recognize each other's assessments, with appropriate due diligence to ensure legal compliance and retain independent decision-making.
- **Accelerate second-jurisdiction reviews:** Where one regulator has already assessed a design, the second regulator will maximize acceptance leverage of assessment of completed work to avoid duplication and speed up deployment.
- **Focus on technologies** that are already in licensing, or ready to enter the process in the United Kingdom and/or the United States.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission was created as an expert, technical agency to protect public health, safety, and security, and regulate the civilian use of nuclear materials, including enabling the deployment of nuclear power for the benefit of society. Among other responsibilities, the agency issues licenses, conducts inspections, initiates and enforces regulations, and plans for incident response. The global gold standard for nuclear regulation, the NRC is collaborating with interagency partners to implement reforms outlined in new Executive Orders and the ADVANCE Act to streamline agency activities and enhance efficiency.