



NRC NEWS

Office of Public Affairs, Headquarters



Washington, DC. 20555-0001
www.nrc.gov ■ opa.resource@nrc.gov

No: 26-036

March 26, 2026

CONTACT: [Office of Public Affairs](#), 301-415-8200

EO14300 Rulemaking

NRC Adopts Leaner, More Risk-Focused Reactor Oversight Process

ROCKVILLE, Md.—The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has approved updates to its Reactor Oversight Process that streamline inspections while preserving strong, independent oversight of the nation’s nuclear power plants. The changes reflect sustained industry performance, technological advances, and direction from Executive Order 14300 and the bipartisan ADVANCE Act.

“These changes right-size our oversight program, reflect the high levels of industry safety performance and will allow the NRC and industry to focus on what matters most today,” NRC Chairman Ho K. Nieh said. “The ROP is designed to evolve, and we will continue refining it based on staff insights and performance trends of licensees.”

New efficiencies in plant oversight will yield an estimated 38% reduction in baseline inspection hours while keeping the agency’s rigorous, independent oversight in place. These changes are based on stakeholder feedback and real-world experience. With consistently strong performance, inspections can focus more on key areas, such as engineering, emergency preparedness, and radiation protection. The updates will also reduce duplicate requests and repeated activities, allowing both NRC and plant staff more time to focus on safety-significant activities.

The revised ROP reinforces the key role of NRC resident inspectors in maintaining strong oversight. Each operating plant will continue to have at least two resident inspectors who will focus on more targeted baseline reviews, which will help reduce the size and frequency of broader regional inspections.

Nuclear plant operators will continue to be responsible for safety and correcting non-compliances. The revised ROP also changes how “more than minor” findings are evaluated. These changes will result in fewer findings categorized as very low safety significance and will improve clarity and consistency in how issues are reported.

Read more in the new [backgrounder](#) and the [Commission’s direction](#). The staff’s proposed changes were previously made public in [SECY 26-0014](#).

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.