

maintenance work at the licensee's facilities on equipment important to safety.

Finally, there is no merit to the Petitioners' assertions that RIs are only assigned to the day shift and that the three inspectors on site are insufficient. The Commission's policy (as established in Inspection Manual Chapter 2515) provides that RIs should spend 10 percent of their total time on site during other than normal working hours. The adequacy of onsite coverage is reviewed on an ongoing basis by Regional management. The number of RIs and the percentage of time spent by RIs during normal working hours at the St. Lucie plant is consistent with Commission policy and that at other U.S. nuclear power plants. The Petitioners have not provided sufficient information to support their assertion that licensee employees do not have reasonable access to the NRC RIs or that there are too few RIs on site to monitor safety-related work.

For all of these reasons, the Petitioners have not set forth a sufficient basis that would warrant the NRC to take any of the actions that they have requested. Therefore, these requests by the Petitioners are denied.

III. Conclusion

The NRC has carefully evaluated each of the many issues raised by the Petitioners. As described above, the NRC has undertaken certain of the actions that the Petitioners have requested. Specifically, the NRC has conducted numerous inspections evaluating the circumstances of many of the issues that the Petitioners have raised, and has reviewed the settlement agreement referred to by the Petitioners in order to determine whether it contains any restrictive provisions that may "chill" the workforce. Thus, to the extent that Petitioners have requested that the NRC investigate these issues and review the settlement agreement, the Petition is granted. However, for the reasons discussed previously, no basis exists for taking the additional actions requested in the Petition. Therefore, in all other respects, the Petition is denied.

A copy of this Decision will be filed with the Secretary of the Commission for the Commission to review in accordance with 10 CFR 2.206(c). As provided by that regulation, the Decision will constitute the final action of the Commission 25 days after issuance unless the Commission, on its own motion, institutes a review of the Decision within that time.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 21st day of October 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Samuel J. Collins,

Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Use of PRA in Plant-Specific Reactor Regulatory Activities: Final Regulatory Guide and Standard Review Plan Section; Availability

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a new guide in its Regulatory Guide Series, Regulatory Guide 1.178, "An Approach for Plant-Specific, Risk-Informed Decisionmaking: Inservice Inspection of Piping," along with its conforming section of the Standard Review Plan, Section 3.9.8, "Standard Review Plan for the Review of Risk-Informed Inservice Inspection of Piping," of NUREG-0800, "Standard Review Plan." Regulatory Guide 1.178 augments the guidance presented in Regulatory Guide 1.174, "An Approach for Using Probabilistic Risk Assessment in Risk-Informed Decisions on Plant-Specific Changes to the Licensing Basis," by providing guidance specific to incorporating risk insights to inservice inspection programs for piping. The accompanying Standard Review Plan Section 3.9.8 conforms to the guide to provide guidance to the NRC staff in reviewing such changes.

These documents are being issued for trial use, and there have been changes made from the draft versions of each.

Regulatory Guide 1.178 now permits partial scope risk-informed inservice inspection. The NRC staff's position is that applications for partial scope will be dealt with on the merits of the submittals, conformance with the requirements of the regulations, and conformance with the guidelines in Regulatory Guide 1.174, "An Approach for Using Probabilistic Risk Assessment in Risk-Informed Decisions on Plant-Specific Changes to the Current Licensing Basis," including defense in depth and margin considerations.

The second change is in regard to some nondestructive examination of the primary coolant piping, even if the piping is categorized as low safety significant and of low failure potential. The NRC staff considers it appropriate, for defense in depth, to continue to require some level of monitoring to provide verification of assumptions in the risk-informed inservice inspection program regarding potential modes of degradation as plants age.

The third change is that the appendices that were in the draft regulatory guide will be incorporated into a NUREG document, NUREG-1661, "Technical Elements of Risk-Informed Inservice Inspection Programs for Piping," which will be issued shortly. NUREG-1661 will also address the technical issues raised in the public comments on quantification of risk from piping.

The documentation requested for inservice inspection program submittals has been significantly reduced and clarified.

Comments and suggestions in connection with items for inclusion in guides currently being developed or improvements in all published guides are encouraged at any time. Written comments may be submitted to the Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555.

Single copies of regulatory guides, both active and draft, may be obtained free of charge by writing the Reproduction and Distribution Services Section, OCIO, USNRC, Washington, DC 20555-0001; or by fax to (301) 415-2289; or by email to GRW1@NRC.GOV. Active guides may also be purchased from the National Technical Information Service on a standing order basis. Details on this service may be obtained by writing NTIS, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161. Sections of NUREG-0800, the Standard Review Plan, may be purchased from the U.S. Government Printing Office, P.O. Box 37082, Washington, DC 20402-9328 (telephone (202) 512-2249). Copies of active and draft guides and the Standard Review Plan are available for inspection or copying for a fee from the NRC Public Document Room at 2120 L Street NW., Washington, DC; the PDR's mailing address is Mail Stop LL-6, Washington, DC 20555; telephone (202) 634-3273; fax (202) 634-3343. Regulatory guides are not copyrighted, and Commission approval is not required to reproduce them.

(5 U.S.C. 552(a))

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 13th day of October 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Ashok C. Thadani,

Director, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research.

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