

Dated: April 12, 1999.

**Richard P. Savio,**

*Associate Director for Technical Support,  
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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

### Correction to Biweekly Notice; Applications and Amendments to Operating Licenses Involving No Significant Hazards Consideration

On April 7, 1999 (64 FR 17021), the **Federal Register** published the Biweekly Notice of Applications and Amendments to Operating Licenses Involving No Significant Hazards Consideration. On page 17022, the paragraph starting "By April 23, 1999, the licensee may file", should read "By May 7, 1999, the licensee may file".

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 13th day of April 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**John A. Zwolinski,**

*Director, Division of Licensing Project  
Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor  
Regulation.*

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## NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

### Public Comment on Recommended Improvements to the Oversight Processes for Nuclear Power Reactors

**AGENCY:** Nuclear Regulatory  
Commission.

**ACTION:** Request for public comment.

**SUMMARY:** The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is proposing significant revisions to its processes for overseeing the safety performance of commercial nuclear power plants that include integrating the inspection, assessment, and enforcement processes. As part of its proposal, the NRC staff established a new regulatory oversight framework with a set of performance indicators and associated thresholds, developed a new baseline inspection program that supplements and verifies the performance indicators, and created a continuous assessment process that includes a method for consistently determining the appropriate regulatory actions in response to varying levels of safety performance. The changes are the result of continuing work on a concept as described in SECY-99-007A, "Recommendations for Reactor Oversight Improvements (Follow-Up to SECY-99-

007)" dated March 22, 1999. The NRC is soliciting comments from interested public interest groups, the regulated industry, States, and concerned citizens. The NRC staff will consider comments it receives in developing the procedures for implementing the new processes.

**DATES:** The comment period expires May 14, 1999. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but the Commission is able to ensure consideration only for comments received on or before this date.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments to: Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail Stop: T-6 D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Hand deliver comments to: 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:45 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays. Copies of comments received may be examined at the NRC's Public Document Room, 2120 L Street, NW (Lower Level), Washington, DC.

Copies of SECY-99-007A, "Recommendations for Reactor Oversight Process Improvements (Follow-Up to SECY-99-007)" and its attachments may be obtained from the NRC's Public Document Room at 2120 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20003-1527, telephone 202-634-3273. Copies also may be obtained from the NRC's Internet web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/COMMISSION/SECYS/index.html#1999>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Alan Madison, Mail Stop: O-5 H4, Inspection Program Branch, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, telephone 301-415-1490.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Background

In September 1997, the NRC began an integrated review of the processes used for assessing safety performance by commercial nuclear power plant licensees. The NRC staff presented to the Commission a conceptual design for a new integrated assessment process in Commission paper SECY-98-045, dated March 9, 1998.

In parallel with the staff's work on the IRAP and the development of other assessment tools, the nuclear power industry independently developed a proposal for a new assessment and regulatory oversight process. This proposal, developed by the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI), took a risk-informed and performance-based approach to the inspection, assessment,

and enforcement of licensee activities on the basis of the results of a set of performance indicators.

The staff set out to develop a single set of recommendations for making improvements to the regulatory oversight processes in response to NEI's proposal, the Commission's comments on the IRAP proposal, and comments made at a Commission meeting on July 17, 1998, with public and industry stakeholders and the hearing before the Senate on July 31, 1998. The IRAP public comment period, a four day public workshop, and a series of public meetings were used to facilitate internal and external input into the development of these recommendations.

Following the public workshop, the NRC staff formed three task groups to complete the work begun at the workshop and to develop the recommendations for the integrated oversight processes: a technical framework task group, an inspection task group, and an assessment process task group. The technical framework task group was responsible for completing the assessment framework and for identifying the performance indicators (PIs) and appropriate thresholds that could be used to measure safety performance. The inspection task group was responsible for developing the scope, the depth, and the frequency of a risk-informed baseline inspection program that would be used to supplement and verify the PIs. The assessment process task group developed methods for integrating PI data and inspection data, determining NRC action on the basis of assessment results, and communicating results to licensees and the public. Other staff activities to improve the enforcement process were coordinated with these three task groups to ensure that changes to the enforcement process were properly evaluated in the framework structure and that changes to the inspection and assessment programs were integrated with the changes to the enforcement program.

The task groups completed their work between October and December 1998, and developed recommendations to be presented to the Commission. On January 20, 1999, the staff briefed the Commission on the staff's proposal as described in SECY-99-007, "Recommendations for Reactor Oversight Improvements." Following the January Commission briefing, the staff analyzed the results of public comments on SECY-99-007, completed remaining concept development, and began development of detailed implementing procedures. Additional information and noteworthy changes are