

POLICY ISSUE (Information)

July 29, 2009

SECY-09-0106

FOR: The Commissioners

FROM: Brian W. Sheron, Director
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES RELATED TO GENERIC ISSUES PROGRAM

PURPOSE:

This paper provides the annual summary of the Generic Issues Program (GIP) activities including improvements to ensure timely and effective resolution of generic issues (GIs). This paper does not address any new commitments.

BACKGROUND:

In the staff requirements memorandum (SRM) related to SECY-05-0126, "Summary of Activities Related to Generic Safety Issues," dated August 31, 2005 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System [ADAMS] Accession No. ML052430101), the Commission directed the NRC staff to develop a plan to focus renewed attention to the GIP to resolve the older GIs and to ensure that future GIs are resolved in a timely manner. In its response to that SRM, "Response to Staff Requirements Memorandum on SECY-05-0126, 'Summary of Activities Related to Generic Safety Issues,'" dated March 29, 2006 (ADAMS Accession No. ML053570259), the staff provided a plan to ensure timely resolution of GIs. Progress reports on this plan were subsequently provided to the Commission in the following documents:

- SECY-06-0161, "Summary of Activities Related to Generic Safety Issues," dated July 20, 2006 (ADAMS Accession No. ML061860078)
- SECY-07-0110, "Summary of Activities Related to Generic Safety Issues," dated July 6, 2007 (ADAMS Accession No. ML071620042)

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- SECY-08-0108, "Summary of Activities Related to Generic Safety Issues," dated July 28, 2008 (ADAMS Accession No. ML081630158)

SECY-07-0022, "Status Report on Proposed Improvements to the Generic Issues Program," dated January 30, 2007, (ADAMS Accession No. ML063460239) discussed GIP improvement elements the staff would implement through a revision of Management Directive (MD) 6.4, "Generic Issues Program." An update on these improvements is provided below.

DISCUSSION:

This paper addresses updates to the GIP. The status of GIs is provided in the 3rd quarter report on the Generic Issue Management Control System (GIMCS). This report is contained in the NRC ADAMS (Accession No. ML091760541) and is also available at the NRC public website on the Generic Issues Program webpage.

In order to have GIMCS Report data available as timely input for this paper and required reports to Congress, the GIMCS reporting cycle will be adjusted earlier by one month beginning with the next quarterly report. Because of this change, next year's summary of activities related to the GIP will cover eleven months, providing status through May 31, 2010 rather than June 30, 2010. Subsequent annual reports of GIP activities will return to a twelve month cycle.

Status of GIs

Since the previous annual report to the Commission (SECY-08-0108), the NRC staff has not closed any GIs. Three reactor GIs remain open in the GIP. Three reactor GIs in "regulatory office implementation" will continue to proceed under other established programs and processes and will continue to be tracked in GIMCS. There are no open nonreactor GIs.

Active GIs in the GIP

The following reactor GIs are open in the GIP:

- GI-186, "Potential Risk and Consequences of Heavy Load Drops in Nuclear Power Plants." (completion of all Agency actions, estimated August 2009)
- GI-193, "BWR ECCS Suction Concerns." (finish safety/risk assessment, estimated March 2011)
- GI-199, "Implications of Updated Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Estimates in Central and Eastern United States for Existing Plants." (finish safety/risk assessment, estimated August 2009)

Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) is the lead office for GI-186. The Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) is the lead office for GI-193 and GI-199.

GIs in Regulatory Office Implementation

The following reactor GIs have been previously transferred from the GIP to NRR for regulatory office implementation:

- GI-163, "Multiple Steam Generator Tube Leakage." (completion of all Agency actions, estimated August 2009)
- GI-189, "Susceptibility of Ice Condenser and Mark III Containments to Early Failure from Hydrogen Combustion During a Severe Accident." (completion of all Agency actions, estimated March 2010)
- GI-191, "Assessment of Debris Accumulation on PWR Sump Performance." (completion of all Agency actions, estimated September 2010)

Their status will continue to be tracked and reported in GIMCS until completion by the program office.

Update on GIP Improvements

The GIP staff will continue to coordinate with other cognizant offices on the timely review and evaluation of new proposed generic issues. During the past year, the staff has made significant progress on improvements to the GIP. The staff has completed a revision to MD 6.4, "Generic Issues Program," that is with the Chairman for review and approval. The RES office instruction, TEC-002, "Procedures for Processing Generic Issues," has been drafted and will be finalized after final review and comments from the other offices and after final issuance of MD 6.4. The NRC staff has and will continue its outreach to inform stakeholders about the new MD 6.4 processes. The staff also has made significant improvements to the GIP internal and external Web pages by expanding the available information on GIP policy and procedures, records on old generic issues, and instructions on how to prepare and submit a new generic issue.

International Efforts

In February 2009, the NRC staff participated in an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) meeting in Vienna, Austria, titled "Consultants' Meeting on the Establishment of the International Regulatory Network." The agenda for this meeting included discussion on the potential development of a website on generic issues which would allow each member country to maintain an IAEA webpage with information on its own generic issues. It is anticipated that the website will enhance the exchange of technical information and eliminate duplication of effort among member countries. NRC staff recently met with staff from other member countries regarding the development of a draft framework and will continue informal discussions.

RESOURCES:

For FY 2010, the NRC staff has further streamlined the GIP process and has reduced the total budget resources. A small increase in full-time employees (FTE) exists because there is a small increment in the workload assisting with the resolution of existing issues during the safety/risk assessment process. Thus, for FY 2010, the staff estimates that the resources needed for these activities will total \$660K and 8.9 FTE.

Table of Budgeted Resources for FY2010 in Comparison to FY 2009

	FY 2009	FY 2010
RES	\$850K and 7.5 FTE	\$660K and 7.7 FTE
NRR	0.8 FTE	0.8 FTE
NMSS	0.1 FTE	0.1 FTE
FSME	0.2 FTE	0.2 FTE
NRO	0.1 FTE	0.1 FTE

COORDINATION:

The Office of the General Counsel reviewed this package and has no legal objection. The Chief Financial Officer reviewed this package and determined that it has no financial impact.

/RA/

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ADAMS Accession No.: ML091410361

WITS 198300621/EDATS: SECY-2008-0456

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