



NRC NEWS

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NRC CHAIRMAN GREGORY B. JACZKO REMARKS AT TODAY'S MEETING ON NEW REACTOR ISSUES - DESIGN CERTIFICATIONS

Note: The Commissioners were briefed today by NRC staff and stakeholders on advanced reactors and design certifications.

Good morning. I first want to welcome Commissioner Magwood and Commissioner Ostendorff to their first Commission briefing. Commissioner Apostolakis is in the process of relocating from Massachusetts and will be officially sworn in on April 23rd. We are fortunate to have these outstanding individuals join the Commission. The NRC will benefit greatly from their experience, expertise, and insights.

Our meeting today will focus on policy issues concerning design certifications for new and advanced reactors. Specifically, the Commission will discuss the strengths of the design certification process, potential areas for improvement, and the lessons we might apply to the advanced reactor area. We also will have to grapple with some general policy issues that need to be worked through before the potential approval of any combined license (COL) applications or the possible submission of advanced reactor design certification requests.

In reforming the licensing process, the Commission thought it could best ensure efficient, predictable, and comprehensive safety reviews by encouraging applicants to first submit completed designs. The process has not worked exactly as envisioned, but once these design certifications are completed, future applicants will be able to refer to these designs in their applications and proceed through the COL reviews sequentially. Whether the applications are reviewed sequentially or concurrently, the agency will always maintain our focus on ensuring that all applications meet our safety, security, and environmental requirements.

Before we begin with the presentations, I would like to recognize the hard work of staff from the Office of New Reactors and Nuclear Security and Incident Response on these issues. They have effectively addressed the technical challenges associated with reviewing new reactor designs and modifications that employ first-of-a-kind technologies. I also want to commend the staff for adeptly managing the concurrent reviews of design certifications and COL applications.

In addition to hearing from the staff today, the Commission will receive presentations from a Department of Energy official and representatives from several vendors.

Editor's Note: Slides from this meeting are available here: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/commission/slides/2010/20100406>. More information new reactors is available at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors.html>.

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