



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa_resource@nrc.gov

Site: www.nrc.gov

Blog: <http://public-blog.nrc-gateway.gov>

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION LAYS OUT FRAMEWORK FOR CONDUCTING MANDATORY HEARINGS ON NEW REACTOR LICENSES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has finalized how it will conduct mandatory hearings on the first applications for Combined Licenses (COLs) for nuclear power reactors.

“These hearings will allow the Commission to ensure the agency has met its safety and security responsibilities. It was important for the Commission to take this last step to finalize the process for making decisions on licenses for new nuclear power plants,” said NRC Chairman Gregory B. Jaczko.

The mandatory hearing process will begin after the staff issues its final Safety Evaluation Report and Environmental Impact Statement for a COL application. Using information gathered during the hearing process, the Commission will decide the findings necessary for the NRC to determine whether to issue a license to build and operate a nuclear power plant.

The Commission intends to issue a decision on the uncontested issues within four months of the issuance of those reports, unless the reactor design referenced in the application is the subject of an ongoing design certification rulemaking. In this case, the Commission would issue its hearing decision if and when the Commission affirms the related design certification rule.

The Atomic Energy Act requires hearings on COL applications. While the NRC’s Atomic Safety and Licensing Board conducts “contested” hearings when members of the public challenge a license application or the staff’s environmental review, the Commission previously decided it will conduct the mandatory hearings, which are separate from contested hearings.

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