

June 30, 1998

MEMORANDUM L. Joseph Callan
TO: Executive Director for Operations
FROM: John C. Hoyle, Secretary /s/
SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS: SECY 98-058 - DEVELOPMENT OF A RISK-INFORMED, PERFORMANCE-BASED REGULATION FOR FIRE PROTECTION AT NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS

The Commission approved the staff's proposal to defer development of a risk-informed, performance-based fire protection rule at this time and, instead, to pursue with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the nuclear industry the development of a risk-informed, and ultimately performance-based consensus standard for fire protection at nuclear power plants (Option 2 of SECY-98-058). Under this approach, the NRC staff would endorse the consensus standard, if successfully developed, in a rulemaking to serve as an alternative method for licensees to meet NRC fire protection requirements. In implementing Option 2, the staff is directed to take the following actions:

1. Work closely with the NFPA so that the consensus standard is developed on an expedited basis and to ensure that the proper risk-informed, performance-based approach is maintained. The staff is directed to update the Commission on the status of NFPA activities, providing an assessment of progress and direction.
(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 11/1/98)
2. Pursue rulemaking to amend section III-M of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50 to eliminate the requirement for non-combustible penetration seal material and make other minor changes to fire protection regulations.
(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 11/1/98)
3. Closely examine plants whose individual plant examinations for external events (IPEEEs) show fire protection vulnerabilities to gain a thorough understanding of the particular risk contributors. In evaluating those facilities, consideration is to be given to the cumulative effects of exemptions to current regulations to ensure that an adequate level of fire protection is maintained. The staff is directed to report to the Commission the results of lessons learned from the IPEEE efforts.
(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 5/30/99)
4. Continue to consolidate existing regulatory positions to generate a comprehensive fire protection regulatory guide to be used in meeting the existing fire protection regulations.
(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 9/30/99)
5. Summarize NRC's fire protection-related research activities conducted to date and seek Commission approval before initiating further research.
(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 10/1/98)
6. Inform the Commission on how and when the fire protection issues as listed in SECY-97-127 will be closed.
(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 10/1/98)

cc: Chairman Jackson
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
OGC
CIO
CFO
OCA
OPA
OIG
Office directors, regions, ACRS, ACNW, ASLBP (by E-Mail)
PDR
DCS

SECY NOTE: This SRM and the Commission Voting Record for SECY-98-058 will be made publicly available 5 working days from the date of the final SRM. SECY 98-058 was made publicly available at a Commission meeting on March 31, 1998.