



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, DC 20555-001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA>

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENTS ON DRAFT OF DISCRIMINATION TASK GROUP REPORT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is seeking public comments on a draft of its Discrimination Task Group Report that contains some 40 recommendations to improve the agency's handling of complaints by nuclear industry workers who allege they have been discriminated against by their employer after raising safety concerns.

The NRC formed the Task Group last April to review the way the agency handles discrimination complaints filed by nuclear industry workers and to recommend possible changes to the agency's regulations, enforcement policy or other agency guidelines. The group held a series of public workshops nationwide to solicit stakeholder comments for consideration in the draft report, which contains preliminary recommendations that have not yet received Commission or staff review or approval.

In preparing the draft report, the Task Group also considered issues raised in a petition for rulemaking by the Union of Concerned Scientists in October 1999 asking the Commission to require NRC licensees to provide specific training to licensee management on implementing employee protection regulations.

Among the recommendations contained in the Task Group's draft report are changes to improve the timeliness of the overall process, the release of information, and NRC interaction with the Department of Labor.

The Task Group includes NRC headquarters and regional employees. It interacted with other federal agencies, including the Department of Labor, the Office of Special Counsel, and the Department of Energy to understand how these agencies handle discrimination complaints.

The Task Group is seeking comments on the draft report by July 13 and is planning to hold a series of public meetings to solicit input on the report and its recommendations. Although no schedule has been set for the nationwide public meetings, the first one will be held in Washington, D.C.

The final Task Group report is expected to be completed by the end of August.

The draft report, the group's charter and other pertinent documents related to its activities are posted at <http://www.nrc.gov/OE> on the agency's web site. For additional information or to submit

comments on the draft report, please contact Barry Westreich of the NRC's Office of Enforcement at 301-415-3456, or via e-mail at www.BCW@nrc.gov .

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