

A Multi-Tiered Approach

The NRC has a multi-tiered approach to carrying out its mission to protect the public and the environment. Headquarters operations officers are on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to maintain contact with licensees and to initiate the NRC response to any incident. The NRC has four regional offices (see the back panel for details) that cultivate key stakeholder relationships in each region, maintain oversight of each licensee through inspection, and respond to incidents as appropriate. NRC resident inspectors who are stationed at (and live near) each nuclear power plant provide daily oversight and inspection of licensees. Licensees are subject to random and formal inspection of plant activities and equipment at any time, 24 hours a day. The NRC periodically inspects licensees' plans, procedures, equipment, operating records, maintenance records, training programs, and corrective action programs.



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Emergency Preparedness & Incident Response



NUREG/BR-0342, Rev. 2
January 2011

Mission

The mission of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is to license and regulate the Nation's civilian use of nuclear materials to ensure adequate protection of public health and safety, promote the common defense and security, and protect the environment.

Key Partnerships

The NRC coordinates with other Federal response partners and State and local entities to ensure that preparedness and response capabilities are in place to protect the public in the event of an incident. The NRC provides oversight of emergency planning for nuclear power plants and their surrounding communities. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides oversight for the "offsite" State, local, and Tribal response organizations and evaluates the effectiveness of the emergency plans and exercises. The NRC uses FEMA's findings and recommendations when making the final determination of the adequacy of licensees' plans. The public also plays a key role in this program by making a plan for themselves and their families, staying informed, and following the directions of public safety officials.



Division of Preparedness and Response

The Division of Preparedness and Response within the Office of Nuclear Safety and Incident Response in Rockville, MD, provides technical expertise for emergency preparedness issues and coordinates the agency's response to incidents involving NRC-licensed facilities and materials.

Emergency Preparedness

The emergency preparedness staff members coordinate comprehensive oversight of the emergency preparedness program in cooperation with the NRC regional offices and in cooperation with FEMA. Examples of emergency preparedness responsibilities include the following:

- developing inspection program guidance and inspecting licensee response capabilities and performance
- reviewing new reactor license applications and revisions to existing licenses
- updating and clarifying regulations through rulemaking and guidance
- partnering with stakeholders in emergency preparedness and response, including State and local governments
- coordinating preparedness activities with DHS, FEMA, FBI, and other Federal agencies

Incident Response

The incident response staff ensures that the NRC is in a constant state of readiness to respond to an incident at a licensee's facility or involving licensed material. To accomplish this, the NRC regularly participates in emergency drills and exercises. Examples of NRC's responsibilities for incident response include the following:

- providing incident response capability 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- maintaining the NRC Headquarters Operations Center
- maintaining the Regional Incident Response Centers
- independently assessing facility conditions and monitoring licensee response activities
- monitoring plant protective actions and mitigation strategies
- maintaining qualifications of NRC incident responders
- coordinating response activities with DHS, FEMA, FBI, and other Federal agencies

