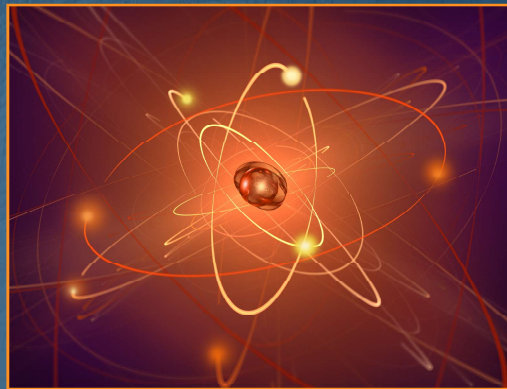


Evidence Building and Evaluation

Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Evaluation Plan



Evidence-Building and Evaluation Annual Evaluation Plan



Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018

The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act)¹ was signed into law on January 14, 2019, and emphasizes collaboration and coordination to advance data and evidence-building functions in the Federal Government by statutorily mandating Federal evidence-building activities, open government data, confidential information protection, and statistical efficiency. Evidence includes fact finding, performance measurement, policy analysis, and program evaluation used to make critical decisions about program operations, policy, and regulations, and to gain visibility into the impact of resource allocation on achieving program objectives. “The Evidence Act builds on longstanding principles underlying Federal policies and data infrastructure investments supporting information quality, access protection, and evidence building and use.”² The Evidence Act requires Chief Financial Officer Act Agencies, including the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), to develop an Agency Learning Agenda (Evidence-Building Plan), a Capacity Assessment, an Annual Evaluation Plan, and an Open Data Plan. This report is the NRC’s Annual Evaluation Plan.

About the NRC

The NRC was created as an independent agency by Congress in 1974. Its mission is to license and regulate the Nation’s civilian use of radioactive materials to provide reasonable assurance of adequate protection of public health and safety and to promote the common defense and security and to protect the environment. The NRC regulates commercial nuclear power plants, nuclear fuel cycle facilities, decommissioning of licensed facilities and sites, nuclear waste, and other uses of nuclear materials, such as in nuclear medicine, through licensing, inspection, and enforcement of its requirements.

¹ Pub. L. No. 115-435, 132 STAT. 5529 (2019).

² Office of Management and Budget, M-19-23, “Phase 1 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Learning Agendas, Personnel, and Planning Guidance,” pgs. 1-2, July 10, 2019.

Purpose of the Annual Evaluation Plan

This report fulfills the NRC's requirement to complete an Annual Evaluation Plan established by section 101(a)(2) of the Evidence Act.³ The Annual Evaluation Plan provides summary information on evaluations being conducted in fiscal years 2021 and 2022. Evaluations use systematic data collection and analysis to address questions related to the implementation of a program, policy, or organization factors surrounding a program, and for organizational learning and improvement purposes. The evaluations being conducted will assist in answering priority questions established in the Interim Agency Learning Agenda⁴, as well as other significant evaluations, such as those required by statute or those of high value to the agency.

Requirements

The Evidence Act requires the following information to be included in the Annual Evaluation Plan:

1. a description of key questions for each significant evaluation study that the agency plans to begin in the next fiscal year;
2. a description of key information collections or acquisitions the agency plans to begin in the next fiscal year; and
3. any other information included in guidance issued by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under subsection (a)(6).

The Office of Management and Budget issued guidance and additional requirements for the Evaluation Plan in M-19-23.

Significant Evaluations

This section includes evaluation plans for activities determined to be of high priority to the agency. Significant evaluation plans may come from activities across the agency such as the Reactor Safety, Nuclear Materials and Waste Safety, and Corporate Support Programs; priority questions from the Interim Agency Learning Agenda; research; financial management; information technology; statutory requirements; and audit recommendations from the Government Accountability Office and the Office of the Inspector General. The evaluation plans provided below summarize the NRC's significant evidence-building and evaluation activities. The NRC determines the 'significance' of evaluations based on factors that include stakeholder interest, resource impacts, and potential risks and benefits to the agency. All publicly available documents can be accessed through the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS).

³ 5 U.S.C. § 312(b) (2018).

⁴ The Interim Agency Learning Agenda will be used to develop the full Agency Learning Agenda that will be included in the Fiscal Years 2022-2026 Strategic Plan.

Risk-Informed, Technology-Inclusive Regulatory Framework for Advanced Reactors

Section 103(e)(1) of the Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act (NEIMA)⁵ requires the NRC to submit a report to Congress within 30 months of the enactment of the Act (by July 2021) that provides an evaluation of the agency's ability to complete a rulemaking to establish a technology-inclusive regulatory framework for advanced nuclear reactor technologies, and whether the NRC has adequate expertise, modeling, and simulation capabilities, or access to those capabilities to support the processing of commercial advanced reactor license applications. Section 103(e)(4) directs the NRC to conduct an evaluation of four topics in the report: whether the NRC can complete the requisite rulemaking by December 31, 2027; whether implementation of the commercial advanced reactor regulatory framework developed by the NRC requires additional legislation, NRC policy modification, or Commission action; whether the NRC's technical capabilities are adequate; and the budgetary and timeline requirements for acquiring or accessing the necessary expertise to support the review of license applications. To complete the requested evaluation, the NRC will conduct a formative evaluation to assess the four topics.

Objective: The overall objective of the report to Congress and its formative evaluation is to assess the NRC's readiness and capacity to complete a rulemaking to establish a technology-inclusive regulatory framework for advanced reactors, including any necessary expansion of the NRC's expertise relating to advanced reactor technology to support the review of advanced reactor license applications.

Key Questions: The agency's formative evaluation will assess the NRC's readiness and capacity to establish the necessary regulatory framework and to conduct licensing reviews for advanced reactor technologies. The evaluation will identify areas, if any, that need to be augmented or strengthened to ensure mission success in this area. That is, in order to assess and ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of future NRC activities in advanced reactor technology policy and licensing, the NRC will conduct evidence-building and evaluation activities to support answering the following questions, as required by NEIMA:

- To what extent is the NRC able to complete a rulemaking to establish a technology-inclusive regulatory framework for licensing commercial advanced nuclear reactor technologies by December 31, 2027?
- Is additional legislation, or Commission action or modification of policy, needed to implement any part of the new regulatory framework?
- Does the NRC have adequate expertise, modeling, and simulation capabilities, or access to those capabilities, to support the evaluation of commercial advanced reactor license applications, including the qualification of advanced nuclear reactor fuel?

⁵ 115 Pub. L. No. 439; 132 STAT. 5575 (2019).

- What are the budgets and timeframes for acquiring the necessary expertise to support the evaluation of advanced reactor license applications?

Anticipated Data Needs and Analysis Methods: This report will require the agency to assess its capacity to complete a complex, Congressionally mandated rulemaking and to assess its capacity and readiness for advanced reactor licensing reviews. The agency's activities to gather evidence and evaluate its advanced reactor program have already begun.

The NRC has performed extensive stakeholder engagement and gathered evidence to determine whether the NRC can complete the required rulemaking by December 31, 2027. Following the issuance of NEIMA, the Commission directed the NRC staff to accelerate this rulemaking and issue a final rule by October 2024. The NRC staff analyzed the evidence gathered and developed a detailed, publicly-available rulemaking plan published on November 2, 2020 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession No. [ML20288A251](#)). This plan provides the NRC staff's analysis, past and projected stakeholder engagement, detailed budget and resource estimates, and other necessary activities to successfully meet the more aggressive 2024 goal.

To more completely inform the NRC staff's proposals, the staff is planning extensive engagement with external stakeholders during the development of the proposed rule by conducting public meetings and releasing preliminary proposed draft rule language to solicit feedback. This feedback will help identify areas where additional policy or legislation beyond the rule language would be necessary or helpful to establish the desired new regulatory framework.

To determine whether the agency has adequate expertise, modeling, and simulation capabilities, or access to those capabilities, to support the review of commercial advanced reactor license applications, including the qualification of advanced nuclear reactor fuel, the agency is assessing its own internal capabilities, engaging other Federal agencies, and soliciting information from potential advanced reactor vendors and applicants. The NRC issued Regulatory Issue Summary (RIS) 20-02, "Process for Scheduling and Allocating Resources for Fiscal Years 2023-2025 for the Review of New Licensing Applications for Light-Water Reactors and Non-Light-Water Reactors," to assist the NRC in determining resource and budget needs with respect to future anticipated license applications. The data gathered from potential applicants in response to this RIS will help build an evidence base to better predict future capacity and expertise needs.

Based on responses to previous information requests from potential applicants and internal projections, the NRC has developed reports in three specific technical areas of expertise and analysis (systems analysis, fuel performance analysis, and source term analysis) to ensure the staff has adequate modeling and simulation capabilities, or access to those capabilities. The staff is generating two additional reports to identify candidate computer codes, technical rationale applied to selecting the appropriate

code, specific development activities and known gaps for licensing and siting dose assessment analyses, and fuel cycle analysis topics. The NRC assesses the adequacy of staff expertise and NRC analytical capabilities by identifying gaps through preapplication engagement with advanced reactor vendors. The NRC addresses knowledge gaps and analytical capability gaps by acquiring training for its staff and by engaging with code developers and researchers in other Federal agencies and external contractors to provide resources to improve analytical capabilities through code development efforts and training.

If the assessment indicates that the staff expects to have adequate capacity and expertise to review projected advanced reactor applications, then the final evaluation question is not needed. If the staff does not expect to have adequate capacity and expertise, then the staff will develop the budgets and timelines to acquire needed expertise. The budget and timeline will be informed by stakeholder input and will draw from lessons learned from the agency's past experiences at quickly and flexibly ramping up for previous surges in new reactor licensing activities.

Stakeholder Engagement: To inform this formative evaluation and the resulting report, the NRC staff will engage and seek input from the Department of Energy, the nuclear energy industry, a diverse set of technology developers, and other stakeholders. The agency intends to hold a public meeting in early 2021 to solicit input specifically related to this evaluation.

Anticipated Challenges: There are two primary challenges to conducting a complete and meaningful evaluation of the NRC's advanced reactor readiness. First, significant external stakeholder input is expected and will be critical to the review. However, with such expedited timelines for the development of the advanced reactor framework, the NRC recognizes that it may have to provide stakeholders with less time than would otherwise be provided in the absence of a statutory deadline. This may reduce the ability of stakeholders to provide meaningful input and may challenge the NRC if the stakeholder feedback is less comprehensive than it could be. Second, given the uncertainty around the quantity and timing of future advanced reactor license applications, accurately anticipating the agency's review capacity will be challenging.

Expected Outcome of Results: The agency's report to Congress, in accordance with NEIMA requirements, will document the results of this evaluation and identify any additional actions the agency may need to take to ensure its readiness for advanced reactor rulemaking and licensing reviews. This report will be publicly available.

Annual Self-Assessment of the Reactor Oversight Process

The Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) is the NRC's program to inspect, measure, and assess the safety and security performance of operating commercial nuclear power plants, and to respond to any decline in their performance. The ROP self-assessment is an annual evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the ROP in meeting its pre-established goals and intended outcomes. The ROP self-assessment is designed to

evaluate the effectiveness of the ROP in achieving the goals of being objective, risk-informed, understandable, and predictable as well as achieving the applicable agency performance goals listed in the NRC's Strategic Plan. The ROP self-assessment also provides timely, objective information to inform program planning and to develop recommended improvements to the ROP. The ROP self-assessment program, governed by NRC's Inspection Manual Chapter 0307, provides the method and framework for how the NRC staff identifies and collects the data required to support self-assessment activities and provides an approach to completing this evaluation.

Objective: The overall objective of the annual ROP self-assessment is to evaluate whether the ROP is implemented in accordance with program governance documents and whether it meets its preestablished goals and intended outcomes for operating reactors oversight. The self-assessment process measures regional and headquarters program effectiveness and uniformity in implementing the ROP, assesses effectiveness of recent ROP changes, evaluates the NRC's response to significant licensee events or declining licensee performance, and performs focused assessments of specific ROP program areas, including the baseline inspection program.

Key Questions: The NRC evaluation includes evidence-building and evaluation activities conducted to answer the following questions:

- Was the ROP implemented in accordance with current program governance documents and was it implemented uniformly across all regions and headquarters offices?
- Did the ROP meet its program goals of being objective, risk-informed, understandable, and predictable?
- Did the ROP meet its intended outcomes, such as monitoring and assessing licensee performance and taking necessary regulatory actions for significant performance issues?
- Did ROP implementation adhere to the NRC Principles of Good Regulation (independence, clarity, openness, reliability, efficiency)?

The findings of the annual ROP self-assessment identify whether improvements are needed in any areas of the reactor oversight process. If improvements are identified, the self-assessment activities are designed to ensure those recommendations are documented appropriately and tracked to closure in a lessons-learned database.

Anticipated Data Needs and Analysis Methods: The ROP self-assessment process utilizes program evaluations and performance metrics to determine its success in meeting the goals and intended outcomes of the ROP. The ROP self-assessment includes, but is not limited to:

- evaluating each of the four ROP program areas (the performance indicator program, the inspection program, the significance determination process, and the assessment program) for their effectiveness, potential improvements, and potential future focus areas. Specifically, the ROP program area leads conduct their respective program area evaluations based on ROP performance metrics

data and analysis, ROP data trending insights, other ROP program execution data, internal feedback from regional staff and resident inspectors, external feedback from ROP monthly public meeting discussions and the Regulatory Information Conference, and other relevant information;

- performing effectiveness reviews of significant changes to the ROP that required Commission approval prior to implementation. The effectiveness review includes a review of the basis of the change, verification of the intended outcomes of the change, and an assessment of any unintended consequences of both individual changes made to the ROP during the period of time under consideration and their cumulative impacts. The review also includes an explanation of how effectiveness was measured and verification that the changes remain consistent with the ROP goals, Principles of Good Regulation, and ROP intended outcomes. If the review concludes that a change has been ineffective or warrants further improvement, adjustments will be considered as needed;
- performing focused assessments on specific topics that delve more deeply into a programmatic area of the ROP to identify and assess indications of potential weakness or areas for improvement; and
- soliciting and analyzing internal and external stakeholder feedback regarding the ROP. The NRC staff actively seeks feedback and implements improvements to the ROP based on evaluation of feedback and insights from all stakeholders. Stakeholder feedback is tracked and assessed and the staff's efforts in this area are summarized in the annual ROP self-assessment paper.

The NRC evaluates whether the ROP is implemented in accordance with program governance documents and whether it meets its program goals and intended outcomes by appraising the uniformity and effectiveness of regional and program office ROP implementation. Through this program, the NRC also evaluates the effectiveness of significant ROP changes, performs comprehensive reviews of selected ROP program areas, and continuously monitors the baseline inspection program.

Stakeholder Engagement: The NRC staff emphasizes stakeholder involvement and open communication regarding the implementation of the ROP. The staff uses a variety of communication methods to ensure that all stakeholders can access ROP information and have an opportunity to participate in the process and provide feedback. The staff seeks external stakeholder feedback on the ROP during periodic public meetings with the Nuclear Energy Institute, other industry stakeholders, and interested non-industry stakeholders to discuss the status of ongoing refinements to the ROP. Additionally, public meetings are conducted in the vicinity of each operating reactor site to discuss the results of the NRC's assessment of the licensee's performance. The staff also maintains numerous public Web pages to communicate current ROP-related information and results. The staff maintains an [ROP "Contact Us" form](#) on the NRC's public Web site. External stakeholders can use this web-based form to provide feedback or ask questions regarding ROP implementation.

To support internal stakeholder involvement, the staff have established routine feedback through periodic engagement between regional NRC management and the partner offices to discuss current issues associated with the ROP. The NRC staff also meets periodically with NRC regional managers to discuss more complex ROP topics. Cross-functional and inter-office staff participate in each region's inspector counterpart meeting and end-of-cycle meetings so that regional staff and management can provide feedback on ROP implementation. Additionally, the NRC has a robust ROP feedback process described in IMC 0801, which allows NRC staff to identify concerns or issues and recommend improvements related to ROP governance or guidance documents. Responsible staff will respond to and address the feedback in accordance with the requirements and expectations of [IMC 0801](#).

Anticipated Challenges: The NRC does not anticipate any challenges in allocating adequate resources to accomplish the ROP self-assessment activities outlined by the ROP self-assessment program.

Expected Outcome of Results: At the conclusion of the annual ROP self-assessment, the NRC expects to identify any program areas of the ROP that may require further evaluation or improvement as well as any lessons learned for future improvement efforts. The staff presents the results of its annual self-assessment of the ROP in a public Information paper. The annual ROP self-assessment paper also supports the annual Agency Action Review Meeting (AARM) and the public Commission briefing on the results of the AARM.

The paper presents the staff's overall conclusions as to whether the ROP has been successful in meeting the goals and intended outcomes of the ROP and the NRC's Principles of Good Regulation. The report discusses metrics that did not meet their pre-established criteria, the staff's analysis of the reasons for not meeting the criteria, and any actions taken or planned to change the program or improve its implementation. The report discusses significant lessons from the analyses of the metrics, including those related to metrics that did meet their criteria. The report also identifies and explains any metrics not evaluated during the previous year. Lastly, the report includes significant trends or insights gained from the staff's monitoring and analysis of the ROP data trending focus areas, including staff actions to address identified issues. The following link contains the previous ROP Self-Assessment papers <https://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/oversight/program-evaluations.html#section1>.

Based on the staff's program-wide analysis of each year's self-assessment results, a positive overall favorable comparison of results to performance criteria would indicate that the ROP met its program goals and intended outcomes for that calendar year. However, for any instance where an aspect of the ROP program may exhibit signs of weakness in terms of performance, the staff will develop a plan to further analyze and address the issue, determine causal factors, and develop recommended process improvements.

Radiation Protection Program

The NRC requires nuclear power plants; research reactors; and other medical, industrial, and academic licensees to use and store radioactive materials in a way that eliminates unnecessary exposure and protects radiation workers and the public.⁶

Objective: The objective of this evaluation is to assess the long-term effectiveness of the regulatory programs for radiation protection across a range of NRC licensee categories. This evaluation will draw on the evidence compiled in the NRC's annual report "Occupational Radiation Exposure at Commercial Nuclear Power Reactors and Other Facilities" (NUREG-0713).⁷

Key Questions: This evaluation will be used to assess the long-term effectiveness of the Agency's regulatory programs for radiation protection and to ensure the program meets the intended outcome of minimizing risk from occupational exposure to radiation. By evaluating the radiation protection programs across the various categories of licensees, relative strengths or areas for improvement may be identified. This evaluation will be used to provide insights into potential improvements to make NRC programs more risk-informed. The NRC will conduct evidence-building and evaluation activities to fulfill this project's objective by answering questions such as the following:

- How can the agency use radiation exposure data from NRC-licensed facilities to assess whether the NRC's radiation protection regulatory programs are achieving their intended outcomes?
- What do the trends in radiation exposure data at NRC licensed facilities suggest about the radiation protection programs' effectiveness over time?
- Does the data suggest differences in the effectiveness across the agency's radiation protection programs?
- Will increased data use provide insights into potential performance measures or process improvements relating to risk-informed regulation?

Anticipated Data Needs and Analysis Methods: Seven categories of NRC licensees are required to report annually on individual radiation exposure in accordance with section 20.2206 of title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR 20.2206, "Reports of Individual Monitoring"). Specifically, these categories include commercial nuclear power reactors and test reactor facilities; industrial radiographers; fuel processors (including uranium enrichment facilities), fabricators, and reprocessors; facilities that manufacture and distribute byproduct material; independent spent fuel storage

⁶ Additional information about radiation protection can be found at the NRC's public website, available at <https://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/radiation.html>.

⁷ The NRC's collection of annual "Occupational Radiation Exposure at Commercial Nuclear Power Reactors and Other Facilities" (NUREG-0713) is available at <https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr0713/>.

installations; facilities for land disposal of low-level waste; and geologic repositories for high-level waste.

The data submitted by licensees consist of radiation exposure records for each monitored individual and are maintained in the NRC's Radiation Exposure Information and Reporting System database and summarized in an annual report entitled, "Occupational Radiation Exposure at Commercial Nuclear Power Reactors and Other Facilities" (NUREG-0713).⁸ Over 97 percent of the licensees submit their exposure data electronically with a small percentage submitting hard-copy paper files which must be scanned and manually entered. To ensure reliability of the data, each method of data submission undergoes data quality control and quality assurance checks. A summary report is generated that identifies any errors or warnings encountered in the data file, as well as the dose totals and distribution of dose to the individuals. This summary report is sent to licensees for review before the data are included in NUREG-0713.

In order to complete the objective of this project, the NRC will perform an outcome evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the Agency's regulatory programs with respect to radiation protection. The outcome evaluation will help answer the question of the effectiveness of the As Low As Is Reasonably Achievable (ALARA⁹) program for the various NRC-licensee categories.

The data in NUREG-0713 provide the radiation exposure information for the current year and the previous 10 years for each NRC-licensee category. This data is analyzed for trends and presented in terms of collective dose and the distribution of dose among the monitored individuals. For statistical comparisons of averages, a two-sided one-sample t test with a 0.05 significance level (i.e., 95 percent confidence) is used to determine whether the difference between the two averages is significantly different. For values that are not averages, such as total collective dose, a 5-year average from the previous 5 years (not including the current year under consideration) is calculated with 95 percent confidence interval based on the normal distribution.

The inferences and statements represented in the evaluation will be based upon the data as reported by the licensees, which does not include uncertainty values associated with the dosimetric calculations. All statistical inferences are made at the population level, i.e., aggregated doses for a licensee or group of licensees.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ As defined in 10 CFR 20.1003, ALARA is an acronym for "as low as is reasonably achievable," and means making every reasonable effort to maintain exposures to radiation as far below the dose limits in 10 CFR Part 20 as is practical consistent with the purpose for which the licensed activity is undertaken, taking into account the state of technology, the economics of improvements in relation to state of technology, the economics of improvements in relation to benefits to the public health and safety, and other societal and socioeconomic considerations, and in relation to utilization of nuclear energy and licensed materials in the public interest.

Stakeholder Engagement: The NRC will obtain feedback on its significant evaluations at its annual Regulatory Information Conference from its stakeholders.

Anticipated Challenges: During this analysis, the NRC anticipates challenges in assessing radiation protection data across dissimilar industries and processes with a dissimilar volume of data between the different categories. Also, additional time will be needed to develop the annual summary of occupational exposure to allow for assessment input from the regulatory offices on program effectiveness.

Expected Outcome of Results: At the conclusion of the evaluation, the effectiveness of the NRC regulatory programs in limiting the occupational dose to nuclear workers and evaluation assessment insights are documented in the annual NUREG-series summary of occupational exposure. Any findings that indicate improvements can be made to lower the occupational dose to nuclear workers will be addressed with modifications to the NRC regulatory programs.

Process Improvement

The NRC operates with structured processes and procedures, such as management directives and office instructions. Since these policies and procedures guide the agency's daily work activities, review and modifications for improvement will move the agency toward being a more modern, risk-informed regulator. This evaluation is being conducted to answer the priority question established in the NRC's Interim Learning Agenda:

- What process improvements can be implemented to move toward becoming a more modern, risk-informed regulator?

Objective: Create an agency culture where continuous process improvement is engrained in our daily activities and behaviors.

Key Questions: Policies and procedures are vital to ensure consistency, clear expectations, performance measurement, and established roles and responsibilities. This evaluation will 1) identify and prioritize agency processes based on the level of potential improvement or benefit to the agency, measured by frequency of use and level of effort, while factoring in potential risks (e.g., loss of transparency, reduced stakeholder engagement) that may result, 2) identify agencywide process gaps that could be improved or benefit from procedure development, 3) evaluate processes or identified gaps, using a process evaluation, based on the priority ranking, and make improvements that result in effectiveness and efficiency while managing any added risk, and 4) develop a process improvement policy statement that encourages the review and revision of office processes to create an agency culture of continuous process improvement. The NRC will conduct evidence-building and evaluation activities to fulfill this project's objective by completing the key results and answering questions such as the following:

- Do the agency's policies and procedures incorporate or specify standard effectiveness or efficiency metrics for tracking progress over time?
- Have previous process improvements for increased effectiveness and efficiency resulted in any negative impacts, such as a loss of transparency or diminished quality? If so, what caused these impacts?
- Are there any technologies available or digital process that could be leveraged to allow continuous improvements to policies or procedures (e.g., digital approval for proposed changes within a section of the procedures rather than revising the entire document)?
- How do the NRC's policies and procedures compare to other organizations' policies and procedures for similar processes?

Anticipated Data Needs and Analysis Methods: The following data will be needed to complete the evaluation:

- Further documentation of the processes and procedures within the agency.
- Baselines of current process effectiveness and efficiency related to time, quality, resources, and level of effort.
- Feedback from internal and external stakeholders, as appropriate, to gather input on the NRC's processes and procedures.

The NRC will conduct an outcome evaluation to determine which processes are not working as intended or can be further improved or enhanced for effectiveness, efficiency, quality, and agility and prioritize them for improvement. Following the completion of the outcome evaluation, the NRC will perform formative evaluations in fiscal year 2022, subject to the availability of resources, and improve a subset of priority processes that are determined to be significant or have the potential for the greatest influence on the agency if improvements or enhancements are made.

Stakeholder Engagement: The NRC will engage with the responsible internal stakeholders, based on the process being evaluated, and will engage with other federal agencies to identify best practices or lessons-learned for processes in place for similar purposes.

Anticipated Challenges: The NRC is challenged with determining the baseline of current process effectiveness and efficiency in order to measure quality and level of effort.

Expected Outcome of Results: At the conclusion of these evidence-building and evaluation activities, the NRC expects an overall improvement in agency processes and successful identification and resolution of process gaps. The NRC will communicate process changes and make evaluations publicly available to stakeholders as appropriate.