

NUCLEAR SAFETY CULTURE UPDATE

August 30, 2011

NRC, Entergy, Devise Plan to Address Fleet Culture in Light of Apparent Discrimination Violation

Last week, the NRC issued a Confirmatory Order to Entergy Nuclear Operations that reflects commitments by Entergy to enhance QC reporting relationships, the Employee Concerns Program (ECP), and the company's Safety Conscious Work Environment (SCWE) commitment. The Order, which takes immediate effect, is the culmination of an NRC investigation that identified an apparent violation of 10 CFR 50.7 — specifically, that a River Bend Station employee received a diminished performance evaluation for raising questions about work qualifications. Entergy chose to resolve the retaliation finding using the NRC's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program.

The Confirmatory Order itemizes a lengthy list of actions Entergy had taken before the NRC issued its investigation findings, including training on section 50.7 and issuing guidance on preparing employee appraisals. Entergy had also conducted an internal investigation into the retaliation complaint, briefed the affected employee and took corrective actions relating to the appraisal, and also evaluated the ECP's investigation of the matter (which evaluation was expanded to include a fleet-wide review of all closed ECP retaliation concerns from 2008 and 2009).

Entergy further agreed to several discrete, fleet-wide actions:

- To reorganize the QC reporting relationship so that individuals who assign or perform QC inspections will report directly to a QA manager
- To review the coverage of section 50.7 in general employee and new supervisor training and to include "insights" and lessons learned from the retaliation allegation
- To have a senior executive issue a fleet-wide communication reinforcing the company's commitment to a SCWE and the rights of employees to report concerns
- To review the effectiveness of enhancements that Entergy made to its ECP procedures.

In addition, Entergy agreed to conduct a safety culture survey at River Bend by the end of 2012.

Per the NRC's news release on this subject, NRC inspectors confirmed that there were no actual impacts on equipment at Entergy's nuclear plants.

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