

No: 14-007

February 11, 2014

CONTACT: Scott Burnell, 301-415-8200

Embargoed Until 10:45 A.M. EST

NRC's Strides in Post-Fukushima Efforts, Enhancing Regulation Featured in International Atomic Energy Agency Report

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission “has acted promptly and effectively... in the interests of the public health and safety” following the March 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident, according to an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report today. The report stems from a follow-up visit from the IAEA’s Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS), which assesses a country’s regulatory infrastructure against international safety standards and good practices.

“We greatly appreciate the team’s findings that the NRC’s post-Fukushima actions are appropriately addressing the lessons we’ve learned,” said NRC Chairman Allison M. Macfarlane. “I’m pleased to see not only that our 2011 Near-Term Task Force report is internationally respected, but that our inspection activities are also highlighted as being ‘exemplary.’”

The weeklong visit of eight nuclear regulators and support staff from European countries examined the NRC’s response to recommendations and suggestions from a full IRRS mission in 2010. The team’s examination of the agency’s response to Fukushima concluded the NRC acted in a timely manner and properly implemented short-term actions. The team also discussed the agency’s commitment to action in the long term, as well as the significant effort that remains for fully incorporating all the changes into NRC regulations.

The follow-up team commended the NRC for effectively addressing one of two recommendations and 19 of 20 suggestions from the original IRRS mission. The resolved recommendation involves comprehensively mapping the NRC’s various processes in order to develop a more integrated management approach. The NRC continues to address the remaining recommendation and suggestion, and will address the team’s new suggestion on consolidating rules and guidance for plants permanently ceasing operation and moving to decommissioning.

The follow-up team’s report will be available on the NRC [website](#). The 2010 IRRS mission focused on technical and policy issues regarding the agency’s oversight of operating U.S. nuclear power plants. The IRRS program provides independent peer review of a country’s nuclear regulator by interviewing staff, examining documents and observing inspection activities. The IAEA has conducted 51 full or follow-up IRRS missions in countries that include Australia, Canada, France, Japan, Mexico, Russia and the United Kingdom.