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(FSME-14-026, March, Program, IMPEP)

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ALL AGREEMENT STATES

PROJECTED INTEGRATED MATERIALS PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PROGRAM  
TREND ANALYSIS (FSME-14-026)

**Purpose:** To inform Agreement State program staff of recent trends observed during Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP) reviews.

**Background:** The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) uses IMPEP to periodically review the NRC and Agreement State radioactive materials programs to ensure that public health and safety are adequately protected from potential hazards associated with the use of radioactive materials and to ensure that Agreement State programs are compatible with the NRC's program. The NRC staff provides an annual report to the Commission as to the status of the NRC's program including trend analysis.

**Discussion:** In the 2012 report, strengthening the Agreement State Program, the NRC staff established baseline information on Agreement State performance. The NRC staff applied similar methodologies in conducting the trend analysis for the annual report on Agreement States' and NRC's Radioactive Materials Programs. For the Calendar Year (CY) 2013 review, IMPEP data from a full IMPEP cycle (2009–2013) was evaluated for trends in performance, specifically in the area of recommendations issued to address program weaknesses. First, the evaluation shows that recommendations are commonly offered for programs to improve the timely adoption of regulations and to ensure timely notification of events to the National Materials Events Database and the NRC Operations Center.

Second, staffing and budget fiscal data are not specifically collected under IMPEP. However, information describing a program's staffing level and program's ability to retain and hire is part of staffing description under the performance indicator, Technical Staffing and Training, along with how an Agreement State program may be funded. The trending review indicates that Agreement States are still experiencing staffing and budget difficulties. How each program addresses staffing and budgets, and the impact on program performance differs State by State. Under IMPEP, performance recommendations are frequently offered when staffing vacancies persist.

Third, the trending review demonstrated weaknesses in two areas under the Technical Quality of Licensing: pre-licensing guidance and preceptor attestations for medical users' implementation. During IMPEP reviews in 2013, IMPEP teams identified weaknesses in these licensing areas in three of nine programs reviewed.

The NRC considers the pre-licensing guidance an essential component of a licensing program. The essential objectives of the pre-licensing guidance are (1) providing a basis of confidence that radioactive materials will be used as intended; (2) performing site visits for “unknown” applicants, as defined in the pre-licensing guidance; and (3) forwarding suspicious applications to the appropriate authority for follow-up. The NRC communicated the expectation of pre-licensing guidance implementation and evaluation thereof, under IMPEP, in Radiation Control Program Director (RCPD) letter RCPD-08-020. IMPEP teams in CY 2013 identified that some programs did not implement the 2008 pre-licensing guidance. The NRC will continue to use the IMPEP to review the NRC Regional and Agreement State radioactive materials programs’ implementations of the pre-licensing guidance.

There are two primary training and experience routes to qualify an individual as a new Authorized User (AU), Authorized Medical Physicist (AMP), Authorized Nuclear Pharmacist, or Radiation Safety Officer (RSO). The first is by means of certification by a board recognized by the NRC and listed on the NRC Web site as provided in 10 CFR 35.50(a), 35.51(a), 35.55(a), 35.190(a), 35.290(a), 35.390(a), 35.392(a), 35.394(a), 35.490(a), 35.590(a), or 35.690(a). Preceptor attestations must also be submitted for all individuals to qualify under 10 CFR Part 35, Subparts B and D through H. Additional training may also need to be documented for RSOs, AMPs, and AUs under 10 CFR 35.600. IMPEP teams in CY 2013 identified that some programs did not fully implement this criteria.

If you have any questions regarding this communication, please contact me at 301-415-3340 or the individual named below:

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