

maintain its structural integrity to ensure core coolability and to ensure that control rods can be inserted.

The Updated Safety Analysis report (USAR) for Perry contains unacceptable consequences criteria for different event categories (USAR Tables 15A.2-1 through 15A.2-4). The unacceptable consequences for normal operation do not preclude fuel leakage. The second criterion listed precludes fuel failure to the extent that the limits of 10 CFR Part 20 would be exceeded. The unacceptable consequences for anticipated operational transients prohibit fuel failure predicted as a direct result of transient analysis. For abnormal transients and design-basis accidents, widespread fuel cladding perforations and fuel cladding fragmentation are prohibited.

Two parts of the fuel system licensing basis for Perry show that limited fuel leakage during plant operation is a design consideration. The fuel system design basis for Perry is given in the USAR Section 15B by reference to the generic topical report "General Electric Standard Application for Reactor Fuel," NEDE-24011-P-A. The generic topical report details fuel cladding operating limits to ensure that fuel performance is maintained within fuel rod thermal and mechanical design and safety analysis criteria. The limits are given for normal operating conditions and AOOs in terms of specific mechanical and thermal specifications. Evaluations of specific fuel failure mechanisms under normal operation and AOOs were discussed, such as stress and strain, hydraulic loads, fretting, and internal gas pressure, to ensure that fuel failure did not result from these causes. The design bases did not preclude the possibility that fuel failure could occur for other reasons, such as pre-existing cladding flaws leading to leakage.

The Technical Specifications for Perry (Section 3.4.8) contain a limit for RCS specific activity. The basis for this limit is the same as that discussed in the consideration of the generic safety concerns. Section B3.4.8 of the Perry Technical Specification "Bases" acknowledges that "the reactor coolant acquires radioactive materials due to release of fission products from fuel leaks." Thus, fission products released during plant operation are clearly considered to be contributors to the source term used for safety analysis of the main steamline break release consequences. The technical specifications state that the limit is set to ensure that any release as a consequence of a main steamline break is less than a small fraction of the 10 CFR Part 100 guidelines. These portions

of the Perry licensing basis are consistent with NRC regulations regarding fuel performance and the associated NRC guidance used by licensees to implement those NRC regulations that were covered earlier in the discussion regarding generic concerns.

The licensee has taken actions to limit the effects of the existing minor fuel leaks at Perry. The control rod pattern has been altered to achieve a depressed flux profile in the vicinity of the leaking rods, thereby suppressing the production of fission products as the plant continues operation. The off-gas treatment system has been effectively eliminating radioactivity in off-gas effluent, and there has been no change in general radiation area dose rates. However, the licensee is continuing to closely monitor the off-gas system pre-treatment radiation levels and is ensuring that the coolant activity concentration remains within technical specifications limits.

Perry has two independent radiation detection systems capable of sensing fission product release from leaking fuel rods: main steamline radiation monitors and off-gas system radiation monitors. The main steamline radiation monitors are used to detect high radiation levels from gross fuel failure. The off-gas system radiation monitors can detect low-level emissions of noble gases, which are indicative of minor fuel damage.

In its letter to the NRC dated February 11, 1999, the Perry licensee stated that if the plant were to shut down solely to remove fuel bundles exhibiting leakage, plant worker exposure would be increased since additional exposure would later be incurred for normal shutdown and maintenance activities. The licensee contends that shutting down in this situation to replace leaking fuel would be an action contrary to ALARA. The staff agrees that conducting plant shutdown only to address the current situation at Perry would be contrary to the ALARA principle for plant workers, provided exposure levels remain at their current values.

The actions taken by the licensee to limit further fuel damage, as well as the continued attention to reactor coolant activity and off-gas radiation levels, provide confidence that Perry can continue safe operation, within its licensing basis, with the limited fuel leakage detected.

IV. Conclusion

The Petitioner's requests are denied for the reasons specified in the preceding sections that discuss the

Petitioner's information supporting the request. The Petitioner did not submit any significant new information about safety issues. Neither the information presented in the Petition nor any other subsequent information of which the NRC is aware warrants the actions requested by the Petitioner.

A copy of this Director's Decision will be filed with the Secretary of the Commission for review in accordance with 10 CFR 2.206(c). This Decision will become the final action of the Commission 25 days after its issuance unless the Commission, on its own motion, institutes a review of the Decision within that time.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 18th day of April 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Samuel J. Collins,

Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 99-10357 Filed 4-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Proposed Collection; Comment Request for Review of a Revised Information Collection: RI 25-15

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13, May 22, 1995), this notice announces that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) intends to submit to the Office of Management and Budget a request for review of a revised information collection. RI 25-15, Notice of Change In Student's Status, is used to collect sufficient information from adult children of deceased Federal employees or annuitants to assure that the child continues to be eligible for payments from OPM.

Comments are particularly invited on:

- Whether this collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of functions of the Office of Personnel Management, and whether it will have practical utility;
- Whether our estimate of the public burden of this collection is accurate, and based on valid assumptions and methodology; and
- Ways in which we can minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use of the appropriate technological collection

techniques or other forms of information technology.

Approximately 2,500 certifications are processed annually. Each form takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. The annual estimated burden is 1250 hours.

For copies of this proposal, contact Mary Beth Smith-Toomey on (202) 606-8358, or E-mail to mbtoomey@opm.gov.

DATES: Comments on this proposal should be received on or before June 25, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send or deliver comments to Dennis A. Matteotti, Acting Chief, Operations Support Division, Retirement and Insurance Service, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 3349, Washington, DC 20415.

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING

ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATION CONTACT: Phyllis R. Pinkney, Budget & Administrative Services Division, (202) 606-0623.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

Janice R. Lachance,

Director.

[FR Doc. 99-10400 Filed 4-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325-01-P

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

January 1999 Pay Adjustments

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The rates of basic pay and locality payments for certain categories of Federal employees were adjusted in January 1999, as authorized by the President. This notice documents those pay adjustments for the public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Denise Jenkins, Office of Compensation Administration, Workforce Compensation and Performance Service, Office of Personnel Management, (202) 606-2858, FAX (202) 606-0824, or email to payleave@opm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On December 7, 1998, the President signed Executive Order 13106 at 63 FR 68151, published on December 9, 1998, which established the January 1999 across-the-board adjustments for the statutory pay systems and the 1999 locality pay adjustments for General Schedule (GS) employees in the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia. These adjustments were made in accordance with section 647 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999, as contained in Division A,

section 101(h), of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277, October 21, 1998). The 1999 General Schedule, reflecting a 3.1 percent general increase, was published as Schedule 1 of Executive Order 13106. Executive Order 13106 also included the percentage amounts of the 1999 locality payments. (See Section 5 and Schedule 9 of Executive Order 13106.) The publication of this notice satisfies the requirement in section 5(b) of Executive Order 13106 that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) publish appropriate notice of the 1999 locality payments in the **Federal Register**.

Locality payments are authorized for General Schedule employees under 5 U.S.C. 5304. They apply in the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia. In 1999, there are 32 separate locality pay areas with locality payments ranging from 5.87 percent to 13.06 percent. These 1999 locality pay percentages, which replaced the locality pay percentages that were applicable in 1998, became effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 1999. An employee's locality-adjusted annual rate of pay is computed by increasing his or her scheduled annual rate of basic pay (as defined in 5 U.S.C. 5302(8) and 5 CFR 531.602) by the applicable locality pay percentage. (See 5 CFR 531.604 and 531.605.)

On December 7, 1998, the President's Pay Agent extended the 1999 locality-based comparability payments to the same Governmentwide and single-agency categories of non-GS employees that were authorized to receive the 1998 locality payments. The Governmentwide categories include members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), the Foreign Service, the Senior Foreign Service, employees in senior-level (SL) and scientific or professional (ST) positions, administrative law judges, and members of Boards of Contract Appeals.

In accordance with section 621 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1999, Executive Order 13106 provided no increase in the rates for the Executive Schedule. The Executive order reflects a decision by the President to increase the rates of basic pay for SES members by 3.1 percent (rounded to the nearest \$100) at levels ES-1 through ES-4. Since the maximum rate of basic pay for SES members is limited by law to the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule, which was not increased, the ES-5 and ES-6 rates of basic pay were not increased in 1999.

The rates of basic pay for administrative law judges (ALJs) and Board of Contract Appeals (BCA) members are calculated as a percentage of the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule. (See 5 U.S.C. 5372 and 5372a.) Therefore, the ALJ and BCA rates of basic pay were not increased. Also, the maximum rate of basic pay for senior-level (SL) and scientific or professional (ST) positions was not increased because it is tied to the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule. The minimum rate of basic pay for SL/ST positions is equal to 120 percent of the minimum rate of basic pay for GS-15, and it was increased by 3.1 percent (to \$89,728) because of the 3.1 percent across-the-board GS pay adjustment. (See 5 U.S.C. 5376.)

OPM has published "Salary Tables for 1999" (OPM Doc. 124-48-6, March 1999), which provides complete salary tables incorporating the 1999 pay adjustments, information on general pay administration matters, locality pay area definitions, Internal Revenue Service withholding tables, and other related information. The rates of pay shown in "Salary Tables for 1999" are the official rates of pay for affected employees and are hereby incorporated as part of this notice. Copies of "Salary Tables for 1999" may be purchased from the Government Printing Office (GPO) by calling (202) 512-1800 or FAX (202) 512-2250. Copies of "Salary Tables for 1999" may also be ordered directly from GPO on the Internet at http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/sale/prf/prf.html. In addition, pay tables may be downloaded from OPM's Internet website at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/payrates/index.htm>. Pay schedules also may be downloaded directly from OPM's electronic bulletin board, OPM ONLINE, which is reached by dialing (202) 606-4800 via modem.

Office of Personnel Management.

Janice R. Lachance,

Director.

[FR Doc. 99-10402 Filed 4-23-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325-01-P

POSTAL SERVICE

Periodicals Rate Anomaly

AGENCY: Postal Service.

ACTION: Notice of procedure for periodicals rate anomaly.

SUMMARY: This notice will advise Periodicals mailers of Nonprofit and Classroom publications of a procedure that has been established by the Postal Service to track differences between