

meeting will be transcribed and will include the following:

(1) An overview by the NRC staff of the NEPA environmental review process, the proposed scope of the EIS, and the proposed review schedule; (2) the opportunity for interested Government agencies, organizations, and individuals to submit comments or suggestions on the environmental issues or the proposed scope of the EIS. Additionally, the NRC staff will host informal discussions for one hour prior to the start of each public meeting at the Bay City Civic Center. No formal comments on the proposed scope of the COLs will be accepted during the informal discussions. To be considered, comments must be provided either at the transcribed public meeting or in writing, as discussed below. Persons may register to attend or present oral comments at the meeting on the NEPA scoping process by contacting Ms. Cristina Guerrero by telephone at 1 (800) 368-5642, extension 2981, or by Internet to the NRC at STP_COL@nrc.gov, no later than January 29, 2008. Members of the public may also register to speak at the meeting within 15 minutes of the start of the session. Individual oral comments may be limited by the time available, depending on the number of persons who register. Members of the public who have not registered may also have an opportunity to speak, if time permits. Public comments will be considered in the scoping process for the EIS. If special equipment or accommodations are needed to attend or present information at the public meeting, the need should be brought to Ms. Guerrero's attention no later than January 29, 2008, so that the NRC staff can determine whether the request can be accommodated.

Members of the public may send written comments on the environmental scoping process for the EIS to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mailstop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and should cite the publication date and page number of this **Federal Register** notice. Comments may be hand-delivered to the NRC at 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays. To be considered in the scoping process, written comments must be postmarked or delivered by February 18, 2008. Electronic comments may be sent by the Internet to the NRC at STP_COL@nrc.gov. Electronic submissions must be sent no later than February 18, 2008, to be considered in

the scoping process. The staff will not consider comments submitted later than as specified above unless time permits. Comments will be available electronically and accessible through the NRC's ERR link <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> at the NRC Homepage.

Participation in the scoping process for the EIS does not entitle participants to become parties to the proceeding to which the EIS relates. Notice of a hearing regarding the application for COLs will be the subject of a future **Federal Register** notice.

At the conclusion of the scoping process, the NRC will prepare a concise summary of the determination and conclusions reached, including the significant issues identified, and will send a copy of the summary to each participant in the scoping process. The summary will also be available for inspection through the ERR link. The staff will then prepare and issue for comment the draft EIS, which will be the subject of separate notices and a separate public meeting. Copies will be available for public inspection at the above-mentioned addresses, and one copy per request will be provided free of charge. After receipt and consideration of the comments, the NRC will prepare a final EIS, which will also be available for public inspection.

Information about the proposed action, the EIS, and the scoping process may be obtained from Paul Kallan at (301) 415-2809 or PBK1@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of December, 2007.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

James E. Lyons,

Director, Division of Site and Environmental Reviews, Office of New Reactors.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Independent External Review Panel To Identify Vulnerabilities in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Materials Licensing Program: Meeting Notice

AGENCY: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: NRC will convene a meeting of the Independent External Review Panel to Identify Vulnerabilities in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Materials Licensing Program from January 14 through January 18, 2008. A sample of agenda items to be discussed

during the public session includes: (1) The NRC's license reviewer training and oversight programs and (2) the NRC's Agreement State program. A copy of the agenda for the meeting can be obtained by e-mailing Mr. Aaron T. McCraw at the contact information below.

Purpose: Continue the panel's assessment of the NRC's licensing program by exploring license reviewer training and oversight and the Agreement State program.

Date and Time for Closed Sessions: January 18, 2008, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. This session will be closed so that NRC staff and the Review Panel can discuss safeguards information and pre-decisional information pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552b (c)(3) and 5 U.S.C. 552b (c)(9)(B), respectively.

Date and Time for Open Sessions: January 14, 2008, from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.; and January 15-17, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Address for Public Meeting: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Two White Flint North Building, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852. Specific room locations will be indicated for each day on the agenda.

Public Participation: Any member of the public who wishes to participate in the meeting should contact Mr. McCraw using the information below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Aaron T. McCraw, e-mail: atm@nrc.gov, telephone: (301) 415-1277.

Conduct of the Meeting

Mr. Thomas E. Hill will chair the meeting. Mr. Hill will conduct the meeting in a manner that will facilitate the orderly conduct of business. The following procedures apply to public participation in the meeting:

1. Persons who wish to provide a written statement should submit an electronic copy to Mr. McCraw at the contact information listed above. All submittals must be received by January 7, 2008, and must pertain to the topics on the agenda for the meeting.

2. Questions and comments from members of the public will be permitted during the meeting, at the discretion of the Chairman.

3. The transcript and written comments will be available for inspection at the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852-2738, telephone (800) 397-4209, on or about May 8, 2008.

4. Persons who require special services, such as those for the hearing impaired, should notify Mr. McCraw of their planned attendance.

This meeting will be held in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (primarily Section

161a); the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.); and the Commission's regulations in Title 10, U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Part 7.

Dated: December 17, 2007.

Andrew L. Bates,

Advisory Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. E7-24869 Filed 12-20-07; 8:45 am]

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OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Personnel Demonstration Project; Pay Banding and Performance-Based Pay Adjustments in the National Nuclear Security Administration

AGENCY: U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Notice of approval of a demonstration project final plan.

SUMMARY: Chapter 47 of title 5, United States Code, authorizes the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), directly or in agreement with one or more agencies, to conduct demonstration projects that experiment with new and different human resources management concepts to determine whether changes in human resources policy or procedures would result in improved Federal human resources management. The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and OPM will test a pay banding system in which within-band pay progression is based on performance. The final project plan has been approved by NNSA, the Department of Energy, and OPM.

DATES: This demonstration project will be implemented on March 16, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

National Nuclear Security Administration: Rosa Benavidez, Demonstration Project Leader, (202-586-1622), Office of Human Capital Management Programs, 1000 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20585. U.S.

Office of Personnel Management: Patsy Stevens, Systems Innovation Group Manager, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, (202) 606-1574, 1900 E Street, NW., Room 7456, Washington, DC 20415.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background

In May 2006, NNSA responded to OPM's solicitation of interest in undertaking a demonstration project to experiment with and test the concept of performance-based pay increases. NNSA already had substantial experience with such a mechanism. NNSA's enabling

statute (*National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000, Pub. L. 106-65, as amended*) provided the NNSA Administrator with the authority to establish not more than 300 scientific, engineering, and technical positions as necessary to carry out the Administrator's responsibilities, and to appoint individuals to these positions and fix their compensation without regard to title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.) [hereafter in this notice referred to as the "NNSA excepted service system"]. In developing an employment system to support this authority, NNSA opted for pay banding and designed a performance-based pay system. NNSA has made full use of its excepted service system authority and considers pay-for-performance a highly effective tool to attract, reward, and retain high performers. OPM's solicitation was opportune. NNSA now desires to test the feasibility of expanding pay-for-performance among the ranks of its larger General Schedule (GS) workforce. At the same time, NNSA sees the demonstration project as an opportunity to streamline the traditional position classification system that governs GS positions by banding together one or more GS grades. NNSA had done similar banding when it established its excepted service system some years before. When NNSA submitted its official proposal to OPM in August 2006, pay banding was a vital part of the plan.

2. Overview

The NNSA Demonstration Project proposal was approved by OPM and publicized in the **Federal Register** on February 28, 2007. With OPM's preliminary approval given, and knowing that NNSA would receive critical comments from the public and have about 6 months to refine its plan, NNSA's Administrator asked the agency's top program managers to re-examine projected career paths and proposed pay bands to ensure they effectively met the varying mission requirements and management needs found in NNSA's primary nuclear weapons, nuclear nonproliferation, and naval reactors propulsion programs. NNSA's Office of Human Capital Management Programs facilitated this re-examination. The agency's top managers were briefed on the various management and mission implications of the project, and discussions with managerial stakeholder groups were held to elicit insights and perspectives on how to ensure the project makes credible and meaningful contributions to enhancing the overall excellence of NNSA's twenty-first century workforce.

Meanwhile, there was a 30-day public comment period immediately following publication of the proposed demonstration project plan in the **Federal Register**, culminating in a public hearing on April 4, 2007, held at the Department of Energy (DOE) headquarters in Washington, DC. A total of 55 individuals, mostly NNSA employees, one NNSA sub-organization, and one labor organization, submitted written comments and questions. Two additional individuals provided comments and asked questions at the public hearing. Many of these commenters offered multiple comments and questions. A total of 170 different comments and questions were received, with some of them duplicative. Comments covered a number of different management and human resources topical areas, and in some cases, pertained to more than one topic. Two broad topics relating to pay bands and pay-related issues received the largest number of comments and questions by a considerable margin. There were 45 comments on pay-related issues and 39 on issues relating to pay bands. Other topical issues earning numerous comments/questions included staffing (17), position classification (14), management accountability (14), excepted service (10), employee relations (7), employee equity (6), performance management (5), and reduction in force (4). An additional 25 comments and questions did not fall into one of the above topical areas. Every comment and question received was extremely important, as each helped to focus NNSA's top leadership during the Administrator's re-examination of the project plan and helped the leadership to better understand the long-term management and employee implications of the project. Public comments and questions often served as a catalyst to raising additional questions on the part of top management. As a result of public comments received, NNSA has made a number of substantive refinements to its plan and a few clarifying editorial and textual changes as well.

3. Summary of Comments and Responses

Comments are arranged into 11 broad topical areas that correspond to the topics identified in the previous section and are presented not in an order dictated by the number of comments received, but in an order that reflects the logic of the project's design scheme and contents; i.e., in a topical order beginning with pay banding and devolving through pay, position classification, staffing, performance