



Requirements for Public Information and Disclosure

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Preface

To improve the level of understanding of information about proposed or licensed nuclear facilities and activities, licensees and licence applicants are required to develop and implement a public information and disclosure program. A public information and disclosure program is a regulatory requirement for licence applicants and licensed operators of Class I and Class II nuclear facilities, and uranium mines and mills for all phases of the lifecycle. This document clarifies the requirements of public information which, in turn, strengthens the public disclosure component.

RD-99.3 and its companion document, GD-99.3, *Guide to the Requirements for Public Information and Disclosure*, are also intended to assist CNSC staff in assessing documentation submitted as part of an application for a new CNSC licence, a licence renewal or compliance verification.

This document is a part of a suite of regulatory documents providing event and routine compliance monitoring reporting requirements, and the public information and disclosure requirements for nuclear facilities. Each regulatory document is accompanied by a complementary guidance document.

Together, RD-99.3 and GD-99.3 replace Regulatory Guide G-217, *Licensee Public Information Programs*.

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Requirements for Public Information and Disclosure

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this regulatory document is to set out for licensees and licence applicants the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission's (CNSC) requirements for public information and disclosure. This program includes a public disclosure protocol regarding events and developments involving their facilities and/or activities.

This document is also intended to assist CNSC staff in assessing the public information and disclosure program for a new CNSC licence, a licence renewal or continuing compliance verification.

1.2 Scope

This regulatory document applies to Class I and Class II nuclear facilities and to uranium mines and mills. It defines CNSC requirements for public information and disclosure programs and related documentation.

1.3 Relevant legislation

A public information and disclosure program is a regulatory requirement for licence applicants and licensed operators of Class I and Class II nuclear facilities, and uranium mines and mills. The requirements for public information and disclosure programs are stated in the regulations as follows:

- paragraph 3(j) of the *Class I Nuclear Facilities Regulations*: "...the proposed program to inform persons living in the vicinity of the site of the general nature and characteristics of the anticipated effects on the environment and the health and safety of persons that may result from the activity to be licensed."
- paragraph 3(r) of the *Class II Nuclear Facilities and Prescribed Equipment Regulations*: "...the program to inform persons living in the vicinity of the site of the general nature and characteristics of the anticipated effects on the environment and the health and safety of persons that may result from the nuclear facility."
- sub-paragraph 3(c)(i) and paragraph 8(a) of the *Uranium Mines and Mills Regulations*: "...the program to inform persons living in the vicinity of the mine or mill of the general nature and characteristics of the anticipated effects of the activity to be licensed on the environment and the health and safety of persons" and "...the program to inform persons living in the vicinity of the site of the mine or mill of the general nature and characteristics of the anticipated effects of the abandonment on the environment and the health and safety of persons."

2. Public Information and Disclosure Program

2.1 Overview

All licensees and licence applicants of Class I and Class II nuclear facilities and uranium mines and mills shall develop and implement a public information and disclosure program.

The primary goal of the public information and disclosure program is to ensure that information related to the health and safety of persons and the environment, and other issues associated with the lifecycle of nuclear facilities are effectively communicated to the public. In addition, the program shall include a commitment to and protocols for ongoing, timely communication of information regarding emissions, effluent releases, unplanned events and other incidents and activities related to the licensed facility that may be of interest to the public during the course of the licence period.

In the case of licence renewals, licensees and applicants shall describe how the public information and disclosure program builds upon past activities and how the program will be updated to address the communication needs of their target audiences during upcoming licensing periods.

The public information and disclosure program shall be commensurate with the complexity of the lifecycle and activities of the nuclear facility, the risks to public health and safety and the environment associated with the facility and activities, and the level of public interest they generate.

The public information and disclosure program shall be managed to ensure that it continues to meet its objectives.

2.2 Program elements

The proposed public information and disclosure program shall include the following elements:

- objectives
- target audience(s)
- public and media opinion
- public information strategy and products
- public disclosure protocol
- program evaluation and improvement process
- contact information
- reports to the CNSC

2.3 Public disclosure protocol requirements

2.3.1 Requirements of a public disclosure protocol

Licensees and licence applicants shall have an established public disclosure protocol to address emergencies or situations where the public has an interest to know.

The public disclosure protocol is an integral part of public information. Licensees and licence applicants shall describe the type of information or reports to be made public, the criteria for determining when such information and reports are to be published, and the medium of disclosure for such information and reports.

Licensees and licence applicants shall consult with public stakeholders and interest groups with a primary focus on the local community to determine what types of information would be of public interest. Typical examples of such types of information include emergencies, releases (including those that may have an environmental impact), accidents, fires and interruption of power generation.

The public disclosure protocol shall be made available to the public and preferably, where practicable, shall be posted on the licensee's and licence applicant's Web site.

Licensees and licence applicants shall send revisions of the public disclosure protocol to the CNSC indicating feedback received from members of the public, the changes and the reasons for the changes to the protocol.

As a minimum, the protocol shall contain instructions, criteria and requirements with respect to the timely disclosure of:

- routine and non-routine releases of radiological and hazardous materials to the environment
- unplanned events, including those exceeding regulatory limits
- on a quarterly basis, the list of events reported to the CNSC or other regulatory body for that quarter
- environmental monitoring reports

2.3.2 Public disclosure notification

Licensees and applicants shall inform the CNSC of disclosures made under the public disclosure protocol described in section 2.3.1 at the time of, or before, such disclosure.

2.4 Documentation and records

Licensees and licence applicants shall maintain documents and records of the public information and disclosure program. The documents and records shall include the policy, objectives, design, program elements, stakeholder consultations, disclosure protocols, information and disclosure releases, program management and verifications, management review, and improvement initiatives.

Reporting to the CNSC on public information and public disclosure activities shall be aligned with the licence conditions on reporting requirements for the licensee.

Additional Information

The following legislation (statutes and regulations) is relevant to this regulatory document:

- *General Nuclear Safety and Control Regulations, SOR/2000-202*
- *Class I Nuclear Facilities Regulations, SOR/2000-204*
- *Class II Nuclear Facilities and Prescribed Equipment Regulations, SOR/2000-205*
- *Uranium Mines and Mills Regulations, SOR/2000-206*
- *Nuclear Safety and Control Act, S.C. 1997, c.9*

The following document contains additional information that may be of interest to persons involved in public information and disclosure:

- GD-99.3, *Guide to the Requirements for Public Information and Disclosure, 2011*