



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC ISSUES SUMMARY OF RECENT U.S. NUCLEAR PLANT INSPECTIONS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has [summarized](#) its inspectors' recent examination of the nation's 104 operating nuclear power plants' abilities to deal with power losses or damage to large areas of a reactor site following extreme events.

The inspections reaffirm that every plant has the capability, including the use of so-called "[B5b](#)" strategies (developed in response to NRC Orders after 9/11 to maintain reactor safety following large explosions or fires) to effectively cool down reactor cores and spent fuel pools following such events. Out of 65 operating reactor sites, 12 had issues with one or more of the requirements during the inspections; many of these discrepancies deal with training. Three of the 12 sites have already resolved their issues and the remaining sites are actively working to resolve theirs.

"Our resident inspectors did a good job spotting problems as well as helping the plants identify areas for improvement," said NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko. "The plants' responses to the Bulletin we issued earlier this month will give us additional detail to ensure they are fully complying with our regulations to protect public health and safety."

The NRC's inspectors examined the plants' B5b strategies, as well as plans for dealing with the effects of flooding or the loss of all the plant's alternating-current power (a station blackout). The inspectors found nine sites had issues regarding some details of their B5b strategies, while three sites had issues with their strategies for dealing with a station blackout. Two sites had issues with strategies for dealing with extreme flooding events. None of these issues undermine the plants' abilities to respond to extreme events.

The NRC carried out the inspections in the aftermath of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, and the resulting damage to the Fukushima nuclear power plant. The NRC will use its Reactor Oversight Process to further evaluate the inspection results and ensure any remaining issues are fixed. Staff will also review responses to a [Bulletin](#), requesting information on how the plants are complying with requirements to deal with the potential loss of large areas of the plant after extreme events. The agency task force that is examining what lessons can be learned from events at Fukushima will also review every inspection report, currently available on the NRC's [website](#).

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