



# The National Organization of Test, Research and Training Reactors

Q1, March 2, 2026

## A note from our Chair

Hello TRTR Community!

As we open 2026, the nuclear research and training reactor community finds itself navigating one of the most consequential regulatory transformations in the NRC's five-decade history. I want to take this opportunity to highlight the key developments you should be tracking as we move through the first quarter.

### A New Commission, A New Direction

Ho Nieh was designated as the 20th Chairman of the NRC on January 8, 2026, succeeding David Wright. Chairman Nieh has signaled clearly that the agency is reshaping itself around speed and efficiency. The NRC has launched a major reorganization aimed at streamlining decision-making, consolidating functions, and aligning with national goals — driven explicitly by Executive Order 14300, which mandates structural realignment, regulatory revisions, and fixed licensing deadlines. For our community, this means the agency we interact with for licensing and oversight is changing in real time.

### The Regulatory Tsunami: Part 53 and Beyond

The single most consequential rulemaking for the NRC remains 10 CFR Part 53. The NRC's risk-informed, performance-based licensing framework under 10 CFR Part 53 — mandated by the 2019 Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act — is scheduled for final rule publication on March 27, 2026. While Part 53 is primarily oriented toward commercial advanced reactors, its performance-based philosophy will ripple through how regulators think about all reactor types, including ours. Members should review the final rule carefully and assess any downstream effects on existing licenses and facility operations.

Beyond Part 53, the NRC is executing more than two dozen rulemakings mandated by EO 14300, with a front-loaded wave of proposed rules scheduled between March and May 2026. Of particular relevance is the proposed rule on "Licensing Requirements for Microreactors and Other Low Consequence Reactors," scheduled for March 23, 2026.

### Enforcement Policy Revised

Effective February 27, 2026, the NRC published a revision to its Enforcement Policy incorporating multiple changes approved by the Commission. Members should review this update carefully for any changes that affect inspection findings, violations, and enforcement discretion at research and training facilities.

### What to Watch This Quarter

Several milestones deserve close attention through March 2026: the final publication of 10 CFR Part 53 on March 27; the proposed microreactor licensing rule on March 23; the ongoing NRC reorganization and its effects on Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation staffing and workflows; and the NRC's evolving coordination with DOE under the updated Memorandum of Understanding on advanced reactor authorization. I also encourage members to monitor EO 14300, which calls for much more substantive changes to the NRC's structure, culture, and regulation, and has yet to be fully addressed by the regulator — meaning more significant near-term changes remain likely.

This is an extraordinary moment for our sector. Research and training reactors are not bystanders in this transformation — we are, in many ways, its proving ground. I encourage all members to engage in public comment processes and participate in upcoming workshops.

As always, feel free to reach out directly with questions or concerns. Thank you all for all of your support during 2025. This continues to be a time of growth for the community and there are many changes at the NRC. We are still awaiting what the restructure at the NRC will bring to the community. I encourage you to please continue to participate in the NRC's quarterly calls.



**Cameron Goodwin**  
Rhode Island Nuclear Science Center

## Quarterly Call Summary

**Non-Power Production and Utilization Facilities (NPUF) Staff**

**Examiners:** Tony Brown (NPUF Oversight Branch), Michele DeSouza, Maggie Goodwin, Amy Beaster, PhD

**Inspectors:** Jonathan Braisted, PhD, Brian Lin, Jared Nadel, Nicota Staples, Andrew Waugh

**Licensing Assistant:** Nicole Parker (Operator Licensing Assistant), Nia Jones

**Project Managers:** Mike Balazik, Patrick Boyle, Zeinab Farahmandfar, Brooke Gallagher, Ed Helvenston, Justin Hudson, Jessica Lovett, Andrew Miller, Cindy Montgomery, Bradley Stambler, Paulette Torres, James Delosreyes, Sara Montanez

**Locations of NPUFs:** <https://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/nonpower/index>

**PM & Inspectors by Facility:** <https://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/reactors/operating/project-managers/>

- The NPUF Branch has 2 new project managers
- The NRC Reorganization is expected to take place this fiscal year now that there is a full complement of commissioners
- Presentations from the 2025 TRTR conference are now available
- Presentation on Safety Analysis Report Submission by Ed Helvenston
  - Remember that the NRC staff will perform a review on the submitted SAR
  - SAR is not required to be in the NUREG 1537 format
  - Redacted information should be consistent throughout the SAR
  - Unredacted SAR must be marked as SUNSI
    - Specifically, please place a header marking "Security-Related Information—Withhold under 10 C.F.R. 2.390" on each page
  - Submissions on EIE are preferred
  - Change markings are required on the updated SAR and a description of reason for the changes is preferred

## Nearly \$600,000 in Reactor Sharing Awards, FY25

Title	Insitution	Amount
<a href="#">PULSTAR Reactor Outreach and Sharing for K-12 Organizations</a>	North Carolina State University	\$200,000
<a href="#">Midwest Reactor Sharing Consortium</a>	University of Wisconsin-Madison	\$199,957
<a href="#">Reactor Sharing Outreach Program at Penn State Radiation Science and Engineering Center</a>	Pennsylvania State University	\$197,255

## EVENTS

- March 10-12: [38th Annual Regulatory Information Conference](#)
- April 19-23: [International Conference on the Physics of Reactors](#)
- April 20-21: [International Radioisotope Supply Chain Meeting](#)
- April 20-24: [The European Research Reactor Conference](#)
- May 11-12: [SMR & Advanced Reactor 2026](#)
- May 19-22: [International Conference on Neutrons in Heritage Science](#)
- June 15-19: [Technical Meeting on Operation, Maintenance and Ageing Management for Research Reactors](#)
- Sept 21-25: 2026 TRTR Annual Meeting (Save the date!)

**Tawfik Raby Memorial Scholarship**

This award recognizes an undergraduate student who demonstrates initiative and excellence in operations or research use of a university reactor.

The recipient will be announced at the annual meeting of the National Organization of the Test, Research and Training Reactors.

[www.trtr.org](http://www.trtr.org) Apply by April 30

[Apply Now](#)

## Member Facilities in the News

### University of Utah TRIGA Reactor Celebrates 50th Anniversary

The University of Utah TRIGA Reactor has completed repairs and returned to operations in time to celebrate 50 years of operations.

### Kansas State University TRIGA Reactor News Feature

The Kansas State University TRIGA Reactor and its training program was featured on local news.

### WSU Operator Training Program Featured

Washington State University produced a video highlighting their reactor operator training program.

### NC State Reactor Sharing Grant

NC State was awarded a DOE Reactor Sharing Grant to create short courses for high school students and educators to learn how to use a nuclear reactor.

### Governor visits University of Wisconsin Nuclear Reactor

Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers visited the University of Wisconsin Nuclear Reactor to learn about the nuclear energy research taking place there.

## Reportable Occurrences

### Penn State Breazeale Reactor

**Event No 58155:** Surface contamination of a shipped package exceeded allowable limits.

See our website for a table of reportable occurrences.

[Read More](#)

## Inspection Reports

### University of Texas - Austin Nuclear Engineering Teaching Laboratory

No violations. [ML25356A504](#)

No violations. Security related. [ML25356A510](#)

### University of Utah Training Reactor

No violations. [ML25356A514](#)

**General Electric Vallecitos Nuclear Center Non-cited violation:** Decommissioning work began on a building prior to NRC approval of the decommissioning plan. [ML25350B746](#)

### Idaho State University AGN-201m

No violations. [ML26007A109](#)

### NC State University PULSTAR Reactor

No violations. [ML26020A023](#)

### Missouri University of Science and Technology Reactor

No violations. [ML26026A219](#)

### University of Massachusetts Lowell Research Reactor

No violations. [ML26006A062](#)

See our website for a table of inspection reports.

[Read More](#)

## Licensing Actions

### Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute TRIGA Reactor

Request to use an alternate method to meet the requirements of the Requalification Plan while the reactor is unable to operate in pulse mode. [ML25303A27](#)

See our website for a table of licensing actions.

[Read More](#)

**Trivia Time**

Which of these locations never had a nuclear reactor?

Disney World  
 New York City  
 Outer Space  
 Antarctica

[Submit Your Answer Here](#)

## ISOTOPIC TOPICS

**FRM-II Fuel Test Successful:** New low-enriched uranium fuel plates for FRM-II have successfully completed irradiation tests in the BR-2 Reactor. FRM-II will soon apply for a license amendment to convert to LEU Fuel.

**New IAEA Report on SLOWPOKE and MNSR Reactors:** The IAEA has released Technical Report No. 497 on the History, Development and Future of SLOWPOKE and MNSR Research Reactors.

**IGORR 22 Proceedings Released:** The proceedings on the 22nd IGORR meeting in Mito, Japan have been released. The 23rd IGORR meeting will be held in South Africa in 2027.

**RA-10 Cooling System Tested:** The first pump in the primary cooling circuit of the RA-10 reactor has been tested.

**New ANSTO Target Increases Mo-99 Yield:** ANSTO has designed a porous, cylindrical, reusable target which increases Mo-99 yields while reducing byproducts.