

ETHICS PROGRAM REVIEW FOLLOW-UP REPORT

Agency: Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)

Follow-up to OGE Report Number: 18-39I

Report No.: 20-04IF

Date: March 2, 2020



As a result of its review of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) ethics program, the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) issued four recommendations in its July 2018 review report. OGE conducted a follow-up review to assess whether the NRC has taken sufficient action to resolve the deficiencies underlying these recommendations. The results of the follow-up review are summarized below.

	Recommendation	Agency Action and OGE Finding	Status
1	Ensure that non-PAS new entrant reports are filed timely.	<p><u>Agency Action:</u> A policy reminder to all NRC employees was published at the beginning of January. The reminder described reporting requirements for temporary assignments and the importance of tracking and notifying filers as well as the Ethics team in OGC. In addition to the policy reminder, in January the DAEO issued a follow up memo to each office director specifically attaching the policy reminder and explaining its importance.</p> <p><u>OGE Finding:</u> OGE examined a sample of reports during its initial review and found that 77% were filed timely. OGE reviewed a sample of public financial disclosure reports during its follow-up review and again found that 77% of the reports examined had been filed timely. OGE will follow up again after the next filing cycle to determine whether NRC's actions result in improvement.</p>	Open
2	Ensure that non-PAS termination reports are filed timely.	<p><u>Agency Action:</u> The importance of timely notification of termination is also explained in the policy reminder.</p> <p><u>OGE Finding:</u> OGE examined a sample of termination reports required to be filed between August 2018 and March 2019 and found that all of the reports were filed timely.</p>	Closed

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3	Ensure that the electronic form generated by the EMS, exactly replicates the existing paper versions of the OGE Form 450 and is capable of being printed as paper copies.	<p>Agency Action: Extensive communication and NRC effort with vendor was unsuccessful. Vendor was unable to provide a solution. NRC is currently working with a new vendor on developing a new system.</p> <p>OGE Finding: OGE will address this issue in its next follow-up review.</p>	Open
4	Ensure that new entrant confidential reports are filed timely.	<p>Agency Action: The issuance of a policy reminder and a DAEO memo emphasizing the importance of timely new-entrant reports, covered both public and confidential reports.</p> <p>OGE Finding: OGE examined a sample of new entrant reports during its initial review and found that 5% were filed timely. OGE reviewed a sample of confidential financial disclosure reports filed subsequent to its initial review and found that 59% of the reports examined had been filed timely. Because of the significant improvement, OGE is closing this recommendation. However, OGE reminds NRC that all new entrant confidential reports should be filed timely. Therefore, OGE advises NRC to continue efforts to increase the percentage of timely filed new entrant reports. OGE is looking forward to seeing the rate of filing timeliness further improved during its next scheduled review of NRC's ethics program.</p>	Closed

Based on the results of OGE's follow-up review, recommendations 2 and 4 are closed. OGE will conduct an additional follow-up review to assess whether the NRC has taken sufficient action to resolve the deficiencies underlying the recommendations that remain open.