

certified to the Commission notwithstanding other provisions on certification in this part) for a determination in the matter of whether the application of the Commission rule or regulation or provision thereof to a particular aspect or aspects of the subject matter of the proceeding, in the context of this section, should be waived or an exception made. The Commission may, among other things, on the basis of the petition, affidavits, and any response, determine whether the application of the specified rule or regulation (or provision thereof) should be waived or an exception be made. The Commission may direct further proceedings as it considers appropriate to aid its determination.

(e) Whether or not the procedure in paragraph (b) of this section is available, a participant to an initial or renewal licensing proceeding may file a petition for rulemaking under § 2.802.

[69 FR 2236, Jan. 14, 2004, as amended at 77 FR 46593, Aug. 3, 2012]

§ 2.336 General discovery.

(a) Except for proceedings conducted under subparts G and J of this part or as otherwise ordered by the Commission, the presiding officer or the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board assigned to the proceeding, all parties, other than the NRC staff, to any proceeding subject to this part shall, within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the order granting a request for hearing or petition to intervene and without further order or request from any party, disclose and provide:

(1) The name and, if known, the address and telephone number of any person, including any expert, upon whose opinion the party bases its claims and contentions and may rely upon as a witness, and a copy of the analysis or other authority upon which that person bases his or her opinion;

(2)(i) A copy, or a description by category and location, of all documents and data compilations in the possession, custody, or control of the party that are relevant to the contentions, provided that if only a description is provided of a document or data compilation, a party shall have the right to request copies of that document and/or data compilation, and

(ii) A copy (for which there is no claim of privilege or protected status), or a description by category and location, of all tangible things (e.g., books, publications and treatises) in the possession, custody or control of the party that are relevant to the contention.

(iii) When any document, data compilation, or other tangible thing that must be disclosed is publicly available from another source, such as at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov>, and/or the NRC Public Document Room, a sufficient disclosure would be the location, the title and a page reference to the relevant document, data compilation, or tangible thing.

(3) A list of documents otherwise required to be disclosed for which a claim of privilege or protected status is being made, together with sufficient information for assessing the claim of privilege or protected status of the documents.

(b) Except for proceedings conducted under subparts G and J of this part or as otherwise ordered by the Commission, the presiding officer, or the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board assigned to the proceeding, the NRC staff must, within 30 days of the issuance of the order granting a request for hearing or petition to intervene and without further order or request from any party, disclose or provide to the extent available (but excluding those documents for which there is a claim of privilege or protected status):

(1) The application (if applicable) and applicant or licensee requests that are relevant to the admitted contentions and are associated with the application or proposed action that is the subject of the proceeding;

(2) NRC correspondence with the applicant or licensee that is relevant to the admitted contentions and associated with the application or proposed action that is the subject of the proceeding;

(3) All documents (including documents that provide support for, or opposition to, the application or proposed action) that both support the NRC staff's review of the application or proposed action that is the subject of the proceeding and are relevant to the admitted contentions;

(4) Any NRC staff documents that both represent the NRC staff's determination on the application or proposal that is the subject of the proceeding and are relevant to the admitted contentions; and

(5) A list of all otherwise-discoverable documents for which a claim of privilege or protected status is being made, together with sufficient information for assessing the claim of privilege or protected status of the documents.

(c) Each party and the NRC staff shall make its initial disclosures under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, based on the information and documentation then reasonably available to it. A party, including the NRC staff, is not excused from making the required disclosures because it has not fully completed its investigation of the case, it challenges the sufficiency of another entity's disclosures, or that another entity has not yet made its disclosures. All disclosures under this section must be accompanied by a certification (by sworn affidavit) that all relevant materials required by this section have been disclosed, and that the disclosures are accurate and complete as of the date of the certification.

(d) The duty of disclosure under this section is continuing. Parties must update their disclosures every month after initial disclosures on a due date selected by the presiding officer in the order admitting contentions, unless the parties agree upon a different due date or frequency. The disclosure update shall be limited to documents subject to disclosure under this section and does not need to include documents that are developed, obtained, or discovered during the two weeks before the due date. Disclosure updates shall include any documents subject to disclosure that were not included in any previous disclosure update. The duty to update disclosures relevant to an admitted contention ends when the presiding officer issues a decision resolving the contention, or at such other time as may be specified by the presiding officer or the Commission.

(e)(1) The presiding officer may impose sanctions, including dismissal of specific contentions, dismissal of the adjudication, denial or dismissal of the

application or proposed action, or the use of the discovery provisions in subpart G of this part against the offending party, for the offending party's continuing unexcused failure to make the disclosures required by this section.

(2) The presiding officer may impose sanctions on a party that fails to provide any document or witness name required to be disclosed under this section, unless the party demonstrates good cause for its failure to make the disclosure required by this section. A sanction that may be imposed by the presiding officer is prohibiting the admission into evidence of documents or testimony of the witness proffered by the offending party in support of its case.

(f)(1) In the event of a dispute over disclosure of documents and records including Safeguards Information referred to in Sections 147 and 181 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, the presiding officer may issue an order requiring disclosure if—

(i) The presiding officer finds that the individual seeking access to Safeguards Information to participate in an NRC adjudication has the requisite "need to know", as defined in 10 CFR 73.2;

(ii) The individual has undergone an FBI criminal history records check, unless exempt under 10 CFR 73.22(b)(3) or 73.23(b)(3), as applicable, by submitting fingerprints to the NRC Office of Administration, Security Processing Unit, Mail Stop T-6E46, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and otherwise following the procedures in 10 CFR 73.57(d) for submitting and processing fingerprints. However, before a final adverse determination by the NRC Office of Administration on an individual's criminal history records check is made, the individual shall be afforded the protections provided by 10 CFR 73.57; and

(iii) The NRC Office of Administration has found, based upon a background check, that the individual is trustworthy and reliable, unless exempt under 10 CFR 73.22(b)(3) or 73.23(b)(3), as applicable. In addition to the protections provided by 10 CFR 73.57 for adverse determinations based on criminal history records checks, the

Office of Administration must take the following actions before making a final adverse determination on an individual's background check for trustworthiness and reliability. The Office of Administration will:

(A) For the purpose of assuring correct and complete information, provide to the individual any records, in addition to those required to be provided under 10 CFR 73.57(e)(1), that were considered in the trustworthiness and reliability determination;

(B) Resolve any challenge by the individual to the completeness or accuracy of the records described in § 2.336(f)(1)(iii)(A). The individual may make this challenge by submitting information and/or an explanation to the Office of Administration. The challenge must be submitted within 10 days of the distribution of the records described in § 2.336(f)(1)(iii)(A), and the Office of Administration must promptly resolve any challenge.

(iv) Individuals seeking access to Safeguards Information to participate in an NRC adjudication for whom the NRC Office of Administration has made a final adverse determination on trustworthiness and reliability may submit a request to the Chief Administrative Judge for review of the adverse determination. Upon receiving such a request, the Chief Administrative Judge shall designate an officer other than the presiding officer of the proceeding to review the adverse determination. For purposes of review, the adverse determination must be in writing and set forth the grounds for the determination. The request for review shall be served on the NRC staff and may include additional information for review by the designated officer. The request must be filed within 15 days after receipt of the adverse determination by the person against whom the adverse determination has been made. Within 10 days of receipt of the request for review and any additional information, the NRC staff will file a response indicating whether the request and additional information has caused the NRC Office of Administration to reverse its adverse determination. The designated officer may reverse the Office of Administration's final adverse determination only if the officer finds, based on

all the information submitted, that the adverse determination constitutes an abuse of discretion. The designated officer's decision must be rendered within 15 days after receipt of the staff filing indicating that the request for review and additional information has not changed the NRC Office of Administration's adverse determination.

(2) The presiding officer may include in an order any protective terms and conditions (including affidavits of non-disclosure) as may be necessary and appropriate to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of Safeguards Information.

(3) When Safeguards Information protected from unauthorized disclosure under Section 147 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, is received and possessed by anyone other than the NRC staff, it must also be protected according to the requirements of § 73.21 and the requirements of § 73.22 or § 73.23 of this chapter, as applicable.

(4) The presiding officer may also prescribe additional procedures to effectively safeguard and prevent disclosure of Safeguards Information to unauthorized persons with minimum impairment of the procedural rights which would be available if Safeguards Information were not involved.

(5) In addition to any other sanction that may be imposed by the presiding officer for violation of an order issued pursuant to this paragraph, violation of a provision for the protection of Safeguards Information from unauthorized disclosure that is contained in an order may be subject to a civil penalty imposed under § 2.205.

(6) For the purpose of imposing the criminal penalties contained in Section 223 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, a provision for the protection of Safeguards Information from unauthorized disclosure that is contained in an order issued pursuant to this paragraph is considered to be issued under Section 161b of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

(7) If a presiding officer has yet to be appointed, the authority to take the actions described in paragraphs (f)(1) to (f)(6) of this section resides in the officer with jurisdiction under § 2.318(a).

(g) The disclosures required by this section constitute the sole discovery permitted for NRC proceedings under

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this part unless there is further provision for discovery under the specific subpart under which the hearing will be conducted or unless the Commission provides otherwise in a specific proceeding.

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§ 2.337 Evidence at a hearing.

(a) *Admissibility.* Only relevant, material, and reliable evidence which is not unduly repetitious will be admitted. Immaterial or irrelevant parts of an admissible document will be segregated and excluded so far as is practicable.

(b) *Objections.* An objection to evidence must briefly state the grounds of objection. The transcript must include the objection, the grounds, and the ruling. Exception to an adverse ruling is preserved without notation on-the-record.

(c) *Offer of proof.* An offer of proof, made in connection with an objection to a ruling of the presiding officer excluding or rejecting proffered oral testimony, must consist of a statement of the substance of the proffered evidence. If the excluded evidence is in written form, a copy must be marked for identification. Rejected exhibits, adequately marked for identification, must be retained in the record.

(d) *Exhibits.* A written exhibit will not be received in evidence unless the original and two copies are offered and a copy is furnished to each party, or the parties have been previously furnished with copies or the presiding officer directs otherwise. The presiding officer may permit a party to replace with a true copy an original document admitted in evidence.

(e) *Official record.* An official record of a government agency or entry in an official record may be evidenced by an official publication or by a copy attested by the officer having legal custody of the record and accompanied by a certificate of his custody.

(f) *Official notice.* (1) The Commission or the presiding officer may take official notice of any fact of which a court of the United States may take judicial notice or of any technical or scientific fact within the knowledge of the Commission as an expert body. Each fact

officially noticed under this paragraph must be specified in the record with sufficient particularity to advise the parties of the matters which have been noticed or brought to the attention of the parties before final decision and each party adversely affected by the decision shall be given opportunity to controvert the fact.

(2) If a decision is stated to rest in whole or in part on official notice of a fact which the parties have not had a prior opportunity to controvert, a party may controvert the fact by filing an appeal from an initial decision or a petition for reconsideration of a final decision. The appeal must clearly and concisely set forth the information relied upon to controvert the fact.

(g) *Proceedings involving applications—*
(1) Facility construction permits. In a proceeding involving an application for construction permit for a production or utilization facility, the NRC staff shall offer into evidence any report submitted by the ACRS in the proceeding in compliance with section 182(b) of the Act, any safety evaluation prepared by the NRC staff, and any environmental impact statement prepared in the proceeding under subpart A of part 51 of this chapter by the Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Director, Office of New Reactors, Director, Office of Federal and State Materials and Environmental Management Programs, or Director, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, as appropriate, or his or her designee.

(2) Other applications where the NRC staff is a party. In a proceeding involving an application for other than a construction permit for a production or utilization facility, the NRC staff shall offer into evidence:

(i) Any report submitted by the ACRS in the proceeding in compliance with section 182(b) of the Act;

(ii) At the discretion of the NRC staff, a safety evaluation prepared by the NRC staff and/or NRC staff testimony and evidence on the contention or contested matter prepared in advance of the completion of the safety evaluation;

(iii) Any NRC staff statement of position on the contention or contested matter provided to the presiding officer under § 2.1202(a); and