



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
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March 12, 2024

Dr. Caleb S. Brooks, Associate Professor  
Department of Nuclear, Plasma  
and Radiological Engineering  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Talbot Laboratory, Room 111C, MC-234  
104 South Wright St.  
Urbana, IL 61801

SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN – APPROVAL OF  
SAFEGUARDS INFORMATION PROTECTION PLAN (EPID: L-2023-NFN-0006)

Dear Dr. Brooks:

By letter dated February 20, 2023 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML23053A098), the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) submitted "Safeguards Information-Modified Handling Protection Plan for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Research Reactor," Release 1, and requested a determination that UIUC has provided sufficient assurance that it will protect Safeguards Information – Modified Handling (SGI-M) from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requirements. By letter dated July 27, 2023 (ML23208A313), in response to discussions of the plan between UIUC and the NRC staff during a closed meeting held on June 27, 2023 (ML23186A017), UIUC submitted Release 2 of the plan. By letter dated January 16, 2024 (ML24016A198), in response to a November 7, 2023, on-site visit by the NRC staff to verify how an SGI-M protection plan would be implemented at UIUC, UIUC submitted Release 3 of the plan. The NRC staff has determined that UIUC's "Safeguards Information-Modified Handling Protection Plan for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Research Reactor," Release 3, will provide acceptable protection of SGI-M from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with NRC regulations.

The NRC staff conducted a review of UIUC's SGI-M protection plan to evaluate whether the descriptions and commitments in the plan provide acceptable protection of SGI-M in accordance with the applicable regulatory requirements in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 73, "Physical Protection of Plants and Materials."

As part of its review, the NRC staff conducted an on-site visit to UIUC on November 7, 2023. The review during the site visit consisted of an examination of security structures, computer systems, equipment, and components; interviews with site personnel; selective examinations of relevant procedures; and observations of site conditions and activities as they related to the protection of SGI-M. Following the site visit, the NRC staff further reviewed, through UIUC's online reference portal, its procedures for implementing the SGI-M plan and conducted a follow-up teleconference to discuss the procedures with UIUC on January 3, 2024.


Based upon the NRC staff's review of UIUC's "Safeguards Information-Modified Handling Protection Plan for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Research Reactor," Release 3; review of procedures; conversations with UIUC personnel during the November 7, 2023, site visit, and January 3, 2024, teleconference; and the prior NRC approval of a reviewing official, the NRC staff has determined that UIUC's "Safeguards Information-Modified Handling Protection Plan for the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Research Reactor," Release 3, will provide acceptable protection of SGI-M from unauthorized disclosure in accordance with the requirements of 10 CFR 73.21, "Protection of Safeguards Information: Performance Requirements," and 10 CFR 73.23, "Protection of Safeguards Information-Modified Handling: Specific Requirements."

Approval of UIUC's SGI-M protection plan relates solely to safeguards matters, does not involve any significant construction impacts, and constitutes a modification to systems used for security. Accordingly, this action meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22, "Criterion for categorical exclusion; identification of licensing and regulatory actions eligible for categorical exclusion or otherwise not requiring environmental review." Specifically, it meets the categorical exclusion in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(12). Therefore, pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b), no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the approval of UIUC's SGI-M protection plan.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390, "Public inspections, exemptions, requests for withholding," a copy of this communication will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room, or from the NRC's ADAMS. The ADAMS database is accessible from the NRC website at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Edward Helvenston at (301) 415-4067 or via email at [Edward.Helvenston@nrc.gov](mailto:Edward.Helvenston@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,



Wertz, Geoffrey signing on behalf  
of Cruz, Holly  
on 03/12/24

Holly D. Cruz, Acting Chief  
Non-Power Production and Utilization Facility  
Licensing Branch  
Division of Advanced Reactors and Non-Power  
Production and Utilization Facilities  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Project No.: 99902094

cc: GovDelivery Subscribers

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