

June 23, 2009

Dr. Mario V. Bonaca, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

SUBJECT: PROPOSED RESOLUTION OF GENERIC SAFETY ISSUE 163, "MULTIPLE
STEAM GENERATOR TUBE LEAKAGE"

Dear Dr. Bonaca:

The staff of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) appreciates the review by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) of the proposed resolution and closeout of Generic Safety Issue (GSI) 163, "Multiple Steam Generator Tube Leakage." Your letter dated May 20, 2009, noted the importance of maintaining the integrity of the steam generator (SG) tubes and acknowledged the extensive programs undertaken by the NRC and the industry to ensure SG tube integrity, including new performance-based requirements in the technical specifications for pressurized-water reactors. You also acknowledged that, as part of the SG Action Plan, the staff has shown that processes hypothesized to rupture multiple tubes during design-basis events are unlikely or physically impossible.

You stated that the integrity of the primary coolant pressure boundary and the degradation of the SG tubes will continue to be of interest to the ACRS. The staff shares your sentiment and will continue to monitor SG operating experience and the effectiveness of licensee programs to ensure tube integrity.

You concluded in your letter dated May 20, 2009, that GSI 163 can be closed as proposed by the staff. The staff will process the closure in accordance with Management Directive 6.4, "Generic Issues Program," dated July 25, 2005, and expects to complete this action by July 31, 2009. Again, the staff wishes to thank the ACRS for its review of the staff's proposed resolution of GSI 163.

Sincerely,

/RA/

R. W. Borchardt
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Jaczko
Commissioner Klein
Commissioner Lyons
Commissioner Svinicki
SECY

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