

March 6, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO: Cynthia A. Carpenter Chief
Generic Issues, Environmental, Financial
And Rulemaking Branch
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

FROM: /s/ Egan Wang, Reactor Engineer
Generic Issues, Environmental, Financial
And Rulemaking Branch
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON
FEBRUARY 23, 2000 TO DISCUSS SPECIAL
TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS

On February 23, 2000, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) held a public meeting with the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) and other interested stakeholders to discuss key issues involved with the development of a proposed rule for risk-informing the special treatment requirements of 10 CFR Part 50 (RIP-50). Representatives of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), a number of reactor licensees, consultants, and others also attended and participated in the meeting. Attachment 1 lists meeting participants. Attachment 2 provides the set of slides presented by NEI. Attachment 3 provides a slide presented by the NRC staff. Attachment 4 provides a set of slides presented by American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

The staff discussed the status of its efforts and its overall plans, particularly its plans to assess commercial standards and commercial-grade treatment as a potential means for controlling systems, structures, and components which would be removed from the scope of special treatment requirements (and would now be within the scope of a new 10 CFR 50.69) and which the new risk-informed categorization process (per Appendix T) determines are not significant contributors to plant safety. NEI described its efforts to develop guidance for classifying the safety significance and risk importance of structures, systems, and components (risk-informed safety categories) and for implementing changes to the special treatment requirements. NEI also discussed its efforts to solicit pilot plant participation in the regulatory effort.

Key Points

1. To date, no pilot plant activities have been confirmed. The Boiling Water Reactor Owners Group has expressed interest in conducting "systems pilots" for two boiling water reactor systems. NEI is continuing discussion with the other owners groups to solicit their participation. The owners group pilot activities would focus on the issue of treatment (rather than categorization and treatment), which the industry views as the

most important technical issue that needs to be addressed in order for potential pilot plants to make a decision to commit to a pilot activity to support the regulatory effort.

C. Carpenter

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2. The staff stressed the importance of integrating pilot plant activities into the overall plan for developing the proposed rule and that the pilot activities should be conducted within a time frame that will support the rulemaking.
3. NEI indicated that favorable progress on the staff's review of the South Texas Project (STP) exemption requests will be needed before licensees commit to "whole-plant" pilot activities. As a result, progress on the STP exemption is essential to demonstrate the viability of the RIP-50 effort.
4. General agreements reached between the staff and NEI include: (1) it will be important to document a clear understanding of commercial-grade practices and a reasonable commercial assurance standard (NEI plans to do so in its guidance document), (2) more effort and focus needs to be applied to the treatment requirements than to the categorization process, and (3) "selective implementation" requires further consideration and discussion.
5. Regarding future interactions, the staff and NEI agreed to continue to hold regular meetings and to conduct its next meeting during mid-March 2000. At that time, NEI intends to provide the staff a preliminary draft of its guidance document and will further discuss potential pilot plant activities.

Attachments: as stated

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Attachments: as stated

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List of Attendees

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