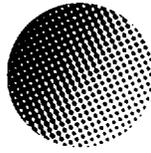


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A. Persinko



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Feb. 1, 2000

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March 30, 2000

Chief, Rules and Directives Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

RE: NUREG-1718, Standard Review Plan on an Application for a Mixed Oxide (MOX)
Fuel Fabrication Facility

To Whom it Concerns:

Although submitted beyond the closing of the comment period on March 27, I request
that the enclosed be included in the comment record.

Enclosed are two articles which indicate that quality control problems have now been
reported in respect to the French state-owned MOX fabrication company. As we have
indicated in earlier comments, quality control of MOX fabrication in any U.S. facility
built and operated with COGEMA's involvement must be fully addressed in the final
SRP.

Sincerely,

Tom Clements
Nuclear Control Institute

Strategies for stopping the spread and reversing the growth of nuclear arms.

Paul L. Leventhal, *President*, Peter A. Bradford, David Cohen, Julian Koenig, Sharon Tanzer, Roger Richter, Dr. Theodore B. Taylor
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Germany Orders Nuclear Plant Safety Checks on Fuel Concerns

Berlin, March 30 ([Bloomberg](#)) – Germany has ordered safety inspections at its nuclear power plants that buy mixed oxide fuel, or mox, from France's state-owned nuclear fuel processor Cogema, the Environment Ministry said.

The government asked regional authorities to carry out the checks after the state of Lower Saxony raised concerns about safety "irregularities" at Cogema, Environment Ministry spokesman Martin Waldhausen said. Regional governments are due to submit the reports "in the next few days," he said.

Germany's concerns over safety at Cogema come a month after British Nuclear Fuels Plc Chief Executive John Taylor left the state-run company following reports of falsified safety data. Veba AG's power unit, PreussenElektra AG, temporarily shut down its nuclear plant at Unterweser to replace four fuel rods supplied by BNFL with falsified documentation. The U.K. yesterday said it would put off the sale of BNFL to the public until late 2002, or after the next general election.

The German government is negotiating with utility companies, including Veba and RWE AG, on a timetable to close down the country's 19 nuclear plants, which together generate almost a third of the country's electricity supply.

The Financial Times reported that a computer error at Cogema's plant in Cadarache affected quality control procedures for a batch of fuel sent to Bayernwerk AG, a unit of Viag AG, last year for use in its Isar 2 nuclear power station.

Siemens Power Generation, a unit of Siemens AG that purchases mox fuel for Bayernwerk, said no safety violations have occurred, the FT said.

Mar/30/2000 4:24

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COGEMA MOX problems

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French nuclear fuel firm admits mistake in data processing

.c Kyodo News Service

PARIS, March 30 (Kyodo) - French nuclear fuel company COGEMA on Thursday admitted it made mistakes in data processing on its uranium-plutonium mixed oxide (MOX) fuel shipped to German nuclear power stations, company officials said.

"The software on a computer that extracts and records data failed to work properly," said COGEMA, whose major clients include Japanese electric power companies.

The company, however, insisted there are no problems with the quality of the fuel.

The announcement by COGEMA followed an order by Germany's Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety to nuclear power stations in the nation to inspect MOX fuel manufactured by COGEMA.

Siemens AG said last week that COGEMA reported data based on a sample of only 60 MOX pellets out of 7,000, instead of the 100 it is supposed to use.

Siemens is an intermediary between COGEMA and nuclear power stations, placing orders and making shipments.

COGEMA has repeatedly been criticized by environmental groups for not disclosing enough information.

All seven million MOX pellets manufactured by the firm undergo quality control inspections, COGEMA said.

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