

April 21, 2000

Dr. Dana A. Powers  
Chairman  
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

SUBJECT: SECY-00-0007, "PROPOSED STAFF PLAN FOR LOW POWER AND SHUTDOWN RISK ANALYSIS RESEARCH TO SUPPORT RISK-INFORMED REGULATORY DECISION MAKING"

Dear Dr. Powers:

In your March 13, 2000, letter to Chairman Meserve, you identified a number of conclusions and recommendations pertaining to the proposed staff plan for low power and shutdown (LPSD) risk analysis research to support risk-informed regulatory decision making. The ACRS conclusions and recommendations are:

1. The staff should evaluate the adequacy of its analytical tools for independently assessing the risk significance of plant configurations during LPSD operations, especially during plant transitions. If the staff's analytical tools are found to be inadequate or lacking in certain areas, the staff should develop a course of action to address these inadequacies.
2. We agree with the staff's proposed continued support to the American Nuclear Society (ANS) for developing an industrial standard in the area of LPSD risk assessment.
3. Assessment of human performance during LPSD operations and transition periods should be included in the ATHEANA (A Technique for Human Event Analysis) project. Human actions that initiate abnormal events should be given special attention.

In a Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM), dated March 21, 2000, for SECY-00-0007, the Commission provided direction to the staff for LPSD risk analysis research activities. Based on this direction, the staff (1) will continue to actively participate in the ANS's work to develop LPSD probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) standards, including some limited work in support of the standards' development, and (2) will not work on methods and tools development, or evaluate other areas potentially important to risk. Work to improve the assessment of human reliability will continue under the ATHEANA program, since it is a generic method not specific to LPSD.

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Thank you for the advice and recommendations. The staff will keep you informed of the progress being made with the ANS LPSD PRA standards.

Sincerely,

***/RA by Frank Miraglia Acting For/***

William D. Travers  
Executive Director  
for Operations

cc: Chairman Meserve  
Commissioner Dicus  
Commissioner Diaz  
Commissioner McGaffigan  
Commissioner Merrifield  
SECY

Dana A. Powers

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Thank you for the advice and recommendations. The staff will keep you informed of the progress being made with the ANS LPSD PRA standards.

Sincerely,

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William D. Travers  
Executive Director  
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cc: Chairman Meserve  
Commissioner Dicus  
Commissioner Diaz  
Commissioner McGaffigan  
Commissioner Merrifield  
SECY

\*See previous concurrence

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