

May 15, 2000

Mr. David A. Lochbaum  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
1616 P Street, NW, Suite 310  
Washington, DC 20036-1495

SUBJECT: PLANS FOR THE 28<sup>th</sup> WATER REACTOR SAFETY INFORMATION MEETING

Dear Mr. Lochbaum:

The Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) will host the 28<sup>th</sup> Water Reactor Safety Information Meeting (WRSM 2000) at the Bethesda Marriott Hotel on Pooks Hill Road in Bethesda, MD on October 23–25, 2000. Technical sessions will utilize the new and improved format which was implemented for the first time at last year's meeting. The new approach was well received and resulted in increased dialog and greater exchange of ideas among the participants at each technical session.

The goal for WRSM 2000 is to promote a dialog with all stakeholders about regulatory research that develops and confirms technical bases for regulatory decisions and prepares the agency for the future. The themes for this year's meeting are: (1) recognition of regulatory research projects and initiatives in the 25 years since the Reactor Safety Study (WASH-1400) that have contributed to risk assessment tools and methods for use in regulatory decisions, (2) research projects and initiatives to improve cognizance of operating experience and response to emerging issues and, (3) research projects and initiatives aimed at making NRC decisions more realistic, eliminating gaps in knowledge and reducing the level of uncertainty.

Within the framework of the WRSM 2000 themes, the preliminary agenda includes eight technical sessions which reflect RES's emphasis on improving the safety focus of our regulatory processes through more realistic analyses. The sessions have been designed to promote discussion on how research contributes to regulatory change initiatives such as risk-informed regulation as well as to recognize the value of regulatory research in preparing the agency to address emerging technologies and future industry requests considering the evolving nature of nuclear power generation. The sessions planned cover the status of research programs of interest to personnel from the NRC, national laboratories, private research firms, independent laboratories, reactor vendors, utilities, universities, many organizations in foreign countries and the public. The titles and objectives for the eight technical sessions that are planned are provided in the enclosure. We are also planning three plenary sessions in which expert panels will discuss the lessons learned in the 25 years since the Reactor Safety Study, the challenges in the future for risk-informed regulation, and the future role of nuclear power and the future needs for nuclear regulatory research.

I invite you to participate as a member of the expert panel planned for the plenary session during the afternoon of the first day, October 23, 2000, to discuss challenges in the future for risk informed regulation. I would also appreciate any comments that you may have on our plans for WRSM 2000. Please contact me by May 26, 2000, in order that we may finalize our plans.

A copy of this letter and enclosure are being placed in the Public Document Room at 2120 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20555.

If you or your staff has any questions regarding this request please do not hesitate to contact me at [ACT@NRC.GOV](mailto:ACT@NRC.GOV), 301-415-6641 or Stuart Rubin at [SDR1@NRC.GOV](mailto:SDR1@NRC.GOV), 301-415-7480.

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Ashok Thadani, Director  
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

Enclosure: As stated

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Sincerely,

**/RA/**

Ashok Thadani, Director  
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

Enclosure: As stated

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## WRSM 2000 Technical Sessions

### First Day (Afternoon):

1. PRA Today: Risk-Informed Regulation  
Objective: To discuss key research activities and initiatives supporting the transition to risk-informed regulation. (Contact Jim Johnson, 301-415-6802)
2. Dry Cask Storage  
Objective: To discuss the cooperative research efforts to address the technical issues associated with dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel. (Contact: Andrew Murphy, (301-415-6011))

### Second Day (Morning):

3. High Burnup Fuel  
Objective: To Discuss new research results which will form the basis for high burnup fuel and various fuel cladding alloys. (Contact: Ralph Meyer, 301-415-6789)
- 4a. PWR Sump Blockage and Containment Coating Degradation (½ Session)  
Objective: To discuss PWR sump blockage and containment coating degradation research and, NRC and industry perspectives on their application. (Contact: Aleck Serkiz, 301-415-6563)
- 4b. Digital Instrumentation and Control (½ Session)  
Objective: To discuss digital I&C research to address current and emerging I&C issues. (Contact: John Calvert, 301-415-6323)

### Second Day (Afternoon):

5. Regulatory Effectiveness Assessment and Improvement  
Objective: To discuss NRC research activities supporting the assessment and improvement of regulatory effectiveness and related industry activities. (Contact: Jack Rosenthal, 301-415-7497)
6. Integrity of the Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary  
Objective: To discuss NRC research programs and results supporting the evaluation of the Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary structural integrity. (Contact, Edwin Hackett 301-415-5650)

### Third Day (Afternoon):

7. Reactor Decommissioning  
Objective: To discuss recent NRC activities to address key decommissioning issues. (Contact: Cheryl Trottier, 301-415-6232)
8. Transient Analysis and Safety Margins  
Objective: To discuss recent NRC activities and initiatives to improve its analytical capabilities, to better quantify safety margins and to more efficiently respond to emerging technical issues. (Contact: Charles Tinkler, 301-415-7480)