

July 20, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO: John Larkins
Executive Director
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards

FROM: William D. Travers /RA/
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: DIFFERING PROFESSIONAL OPINION ON STEAM GENERATOR
TUBE INTEGRITY ISSUES

The purpose of this memorandum is to request that the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) assist in the process to review a Differing Professional Opinion (DPO) on Steam Generator Tube Integrity Issues. Specifically, I am requesting that the ACRS function as the equivalent of an ad hoc panel, under Management Directive (MD) 10.159, to review the DPO.

The issues raised in the DPO are reflected in the Staff Consideration Document dated November 1, 1999, and the DPO Reply Document dated December 16, 1999 (and attachments). Consideration of this differing professional opinion (DPO) has been proceeding according to a memorandum dated December 29, 1998, included as an attachment, which established a three-step approach. Step (1) publication of specific documents for public comment, and Step (2) preparation of a final staff position, have been completed. The author of the DPO, has completed his part of Step (3) by reviewing the staff's final position and providing a response in which he identifies areas which he believes are still unresolved. The appointment of an ad hoc panel to address the remaining issues completes Step (3). We have attempted to establish an ad hoc panel comprised of members of the NRC staff who are suitable for the task and acceptable to the DPO author. However, these attempts have been unsuccessful. In light of the broad expertise and independence of the ACRS, I am requesting that for this particular DPO, the ACRS function as the equivalent of an ad hoc panel described in MD 10.159.

This DPO deals with complex technical issues. After completing the review, I request that the ACRS provide me a summary report that documents its conclusions and any recommendations relative to the pertinent technical issues.

Since 1991, an extensive record of documentation has been developed on the underlying technical issues. These documents would be provided to the ACRS to assist in the review. To facilitate transferring the collected documentation and information regarding the DPO, please contact my staff to establish a mutually agreeable time to meet.

Thank you for your assistance in reviewing this important matter.

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