

November 20, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO: Ashok C. Thadani, Director  
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

FROM: Samuel J. Collins, Director */RA/*  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: USER NEED SUPPORT FOR THE REACTOR OVERSIGHT  
PROCESS

This memorandum acknowledges your May 31, 2000, status report on current and planned Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES) activities pursuant to our updated user needs request dated March 17, 2000.

The following comments are organized by the item numbers used in your memorandum.

1. Significance Determination Process (SDP) Inspection Notebooks

The stated work product descriptions are acceptable. The current goal remains the development and evolution of reasonable consistency between the SDP notebook and the corresponding SPAR model for each plant, while maintaining an appropriate degree of conservatism in the SDP notebooks to support their intended use by inspectors. The SDP notebook worksheets must continue to provide an inspector-friendly means to identify potentially risk significant inspection findings and to effectively communicate the basis for the corresponding risk significance. We would be interested in reviewing concepts for an electronic version of the SDP notebooks that retain these identification and communication characteristics while making their use more efficient. Regarding the incorporation of external event initiators into the SDP Inspection Notebooks, we will not make a determination of how to proceed until we review the results of the scoping assessment. Scheduler comments regarding the SPAR model revision 3 effort are given in item 6. The NRR point-of-contact for this area will be in the Probabilistic Safety Assessment Branch (SPSB).

2. Risk-Based Performance Indicators

Current progress and ongoing dialog between our staffs is acceptable.

3. Containment, Fire Protection, and Shutdown SDPs

Resolution of NRR comments on the draft NUREG regarding containment barrier deficiencies, provided to your staff in March 2000, is requested as soon as possible to support our development of inspection manual guidance. The other stated work product descriptions and schedules are acceptable.

CONTACT: Doug Coe  
301-415-2040

The insights that RES provided on remote shutdown operations are very useful and will be included in a future revision to the fire protection SDP. In RES's August 9, 2000, transmittal letter to NRR, RES raised concerns regarding the need to do more work. This included work to identify additional suitable inspectables, further human reliability analysis and to reduce uncertainties.

NRR is currently assessing the need for this or any other assistance with the fire protection SDP. If any additional work is needed, NRR will request this work in a future user need memorandum.

4. Evaluation Method for Licensee Corrective Action Program

The stated work product description is acceptable. Experience with initial implementation of the reactor oversight process may dictate the need to increase the schedule priority in the future. If this need should arise, we will dialog with your staff as necessary.

5. Effect of Human Performance on Plant Safety

The stated work product descriptions and schedules are acceptable.

6. Computer-Based Risk Analysis Model (SPAR) Development

We have responded to the proposed SPAR model development plan in a memorandum from G. Holahan to T. King dated September 13, 2000. The order of development of these revised models should be coordinated with Regional needs. In addition, we have discussed with your staff the maximization of the use of plant-specific information obtained from the SDP site visits. The NRR point-of-contact for this area will be in SPSB.

7. Standardization of Risk Communication Methods

Our user need request anticipated the importance of effective agency-wide and public risk communication. Risk communication must be consistent among all Offices and founded upon common underlying principles for effective communication both internally and to external stakeholders. Increased dependence on risk information in agency communications has made the staff's need for standardization imperative. We suggest that RES build upon its previous risk communication work and obtain inter-office support for continued work in this area.

cc:

F. Miraglia, DEDR  
D. Matthews, DRIP  
J. Zwolinski, DLPM  
J. Strosnider, DE  
T. King, RES  
M. Cunningham, RES  
J. Rosenthal, RES  
P. Baranowsky, RES

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\*See previous concurrence

<b>OFC:</b>	NRR/IIPB		NRR/IIPB				NRR/DSSA	
<b>NAME:</b>	DCoe*		WMDean*		RBarrett*		GHolahan*	
<b>DATE:</b>	8/08/00		8/08/00		9/20/00		9/25/00	
<b>OFC:</b>	NRR/DIPM		NRR/ADIP		NRR			
<b>NAME:</b>	BABoger*		JJohnson*		SCollins			
<b>DATE:</b>	10/31/00		11/2 /00		11/20/00			