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Date: Mon, Sep 25, 2000 6:11 PM
Subject: Comments on SECY-00-0194

John, attached are draft comments that STP has generated on the SECY. Let's talk tomorrow on this.

Glen

CC: "Scott Head" <smhead.GWPO_NASSUR.GWDOM_STP@stpegs....>

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Subject: Comments on SECY-00-0194
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Thoughts on SECY-00-0194

Overall thoughts on the SECY:

- while the SECY resolved a couple of issues (i.e., selective implementation of regulations and grand-fathering of pilot plants), the SECY has muddied the waters on a number of other issues (i.e., Maintenance Rule) and has generated some significant new issues (i.e., redefinition of the four RISC boxes and timing to complete categorization).
- the timing of the SECY distribution is poor (within two weeks of a Commission Briefing), and the requested actions are even poorer. Industry is requested to provide comments on the SECY before the Commission Briefing on 9/29 with no opportunity for interaction among industry groups or with the NRC staff. This sets us up for a mixed and divergent communication in front of the Commissioners on this topic.

Specific comments are as follows:

Background

- The staff is changing the original focus intended in SECY-98-300. Under Option 2, SECY-98-300 states ‘Under this option, SSCs of low safety significance (from a risk-informed assessment) would move from ‘special treatment’ to normal industrial (sometimes called ‘commercial’ treatment), but would remain in the plant and be expected to perform their design function *but without additional margin, assurance or documentation associated with high safety significant SSCs.*’ (italics added for emphasis). Within SECY-00-0194, the staff states ‘Option 2 addresses the implementation of changes to the scope of SSCs needing special treatment *while still providing assurance that the SSCs will perform their design functions.*’ (italics added for emphasis).

Selective Implementation

- The staff is requiring that all RISC-1 and RISC-2 SSCs be identified. Since SSCs don’t fall into a RISC box until they are categorized, this would necessitate that all systems and all SSCs go through the categorization process. In addition, in response to Issue 1-9, the staff states that the categorization should be completed within three years. This timeframe is unrealistic and may be unachievable.
- Selective system implementation needs to be permitted to allow advantages to be realized as soon as each system categorization is completed.

Impact on Other Regulations

- The staff believes that Part 54 (License Renewal) should be inclusive of RISC-3 SSCs, with adequate aging management demonstration under 54.21. This focus on the least significant SSCs and an aging management program to address them appear onerous and unnecessary.

Need for Prior NRC Review

- The staff is still mandating a very prescriptive Appendix T to allow a no-prior-review approach. We believe that a detailed Appendix T should not be synonymous with prescriptiveness. Flexibility must be permitted to allow new insights to be included into the process. An industry guideline (similar to the NEI proposed guideline) is still recommended as opposed to a prescriptive Appendix.

PRA Quality

- We are still supportive of an industry PRA certification and peer review process.
- It is unclear if the staff is requiring that the PRA include separate internal events, fire, and seismic PRAs. If so, we are not supportive of this position.
- SECY-00-0162 is referenced in this SECY, however, 00-0162 has not been officially transmitted to the industry.

Part 21

- The staff states that a regulatory requirement may need to be specified for reporting RISC-2 failures. We believe that 50.72 and 50.73 reporting requirements are sufficient to report RISC-2 defects.

Categorization

- There is a significant change in the four-box categorization concept. The staff states that removing low safety significant, augmented quality, non-safety related SSCs out of regulatory scope is inconsistent with their intent. The staff's proposed redefinition of the categorization boxes would result in a significant movement of components already categorized at STP. The combined percentage of RISC-1 and -3 SSCs is currently 38.26%. If this SECY were adopted as is, the new RISC-1 and -3 percentage would be 72.89%. It is clear that the staff is having difficulty letting go of the deterministic regulatory controls that are in place.
- It is unclear with the redefinition of the four box approach if the staff has actually created a six box categorization process. The six boxes would include the following:

RISC-1(1) – safety-related, safety significant subject to full regulatory treatment
RISC-1(2) – non-safety-related, safety significant with limited regulatory treatment
RISC-2 - non-safety-related, safety significant with no regulatory treatment
RISC-3(1) – safety-related, not safety significant subject to partial regulatory treatment
RISC-3(2) – non-safety-related, not safety significant subject to limited regulatory treatment
RISC-4 - non-safety-related, not safety significant subject to no regulatory treatment

- The staff is still under the impression that just because a component is categorized and its treatment adjusted, the failure rate of the component will change. STP has shown that the failure rates of safety-related and non-safety-related SSCs are essentially the same.
- The staff's views on categorization are unclear. In some places, the staff assumes that a large number of SSCs are modeled in the PRA when in fact a relatively small number of SSCs are modeled compared to all SSCs in the plant. In addition, the staff appears to discount consideration of the probability of SSC failure in IDP deliberations.
- The staff places heightened attention on consideration of fission product release barriers and Severe Accident Management Guidelines in the categorization process. The STP categorization approach did not focus great attention in these areas.
- The level of documentation in the categorization process is unclear in the SECY. The level of expected documentation for defense in depth and safety margin considerations could become burdensome.

Treatment

- The replacement allowances for RISC-3 SSCs should be clarified. It is unclear of the degree of assurance that is necessary to demonstrate functional requirements and design conditions.
- The SECY requires a detailed documentation of commercial practices to be included in the FSAR. This level of detail is contrary to the NRC's previous guidance on what detail should be included in the FSAR.

Maintenance Rule

- The staff states that the use of the Maintenance Rule is insufficient to monitor RISC-1, -2, and -3 SSCs. The staff states that they intend to create a new monitoring requirement in 50.69 to take the place of the Maintenance Rule for these RISC boxes. We believe that the Maintenance Rule is the appropriate monitoring tool for safety significant SSCs and have concerns about a new monitoring requirement being created.

Pilot Program

- Based on the guidance that still needs to be developed as stated in the SECY, the new issues that have been created, and the uncertainty of resolution of these issues, it is highly unlikely that additional pilot plants (other than STP) will step forward to pilot the Option 2 process. This places additional importance onto the STP Exemption Request, the Exemption schedule, and the final resolution of this Request. If the Exemption Request is extensively delayed or denied, the viability of additional Option 2 opportunities is in question.