

October 25, 2000

Dr. Dana A. Powers  
Chairman  
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

SUBJECT: ACRS LETTER DATED SEPTEMBER 7, 2000, "ASSESSMENT OF THE  
QUALITY OF PROBABILISTIC RISK ASSESSMENTS"

Dear Dr. Powers:

The subject letter to Chairman Meserve discussed the staff's recent work to address the issue of the quality of probabilistic risk assessments (PRAs) used in regulatory decision making. This work was described in SECY-00-0162. Your letter provided several conclusions on the staff's work and one recommendation. We agree with the Committee's conclusions. The Committee's recommendation, and the staff's response, is:

ACRS Recommendation: The staff should augment its collection of examples of risk-informed decisions and the requisite PRA quality to include a more diverse set of examples and should provide more details on how risk information was used. This would enable generic conclusions to be drawn regarding the role and quality of the risk information utilized in these decisions.

Staff Response: We agree. We will continue to identify and examine examples of how PRA has been used in risk-informed decisions, and use this information in our on-going work with respect to PRA standards and other PRA quality issues.

The staff will continue to brief, as well as solicit the opinions of, the ACRS on its work on addressing PRA quality.

Sincerely,

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William D. Travers  
Executive Director  
for Operations

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

OFFICE	PRAB/DRAA/RES		PRAB/DRAA/RES		DRAA/RES
NAME	MDrouin		MCunningham		TKing
DATE	10/10/00		10/10/00		10/10/00
OFFICE	NRR		RES:D	DEDMRS	EDO
NAME	BSheron		AThadani	CPaperiello	WTravers
DATE	10/18/00		10/20/00	10/24/00	10/25/00

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