

November 8, 2000

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Meserve
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield

FROM: William D. Travers */RA by Frank J. Miraglia Acting For/*
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: UPDATE OF STAFF INTERACTIONS WITH ASME ON PRA
STANDARDS

For the past several years, the staff has been working with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) and other organizations to develop consensus standards for probabilistic risk assessments (PRAs). In June 2000, ASME issued Revision 12 of a proposed PRA standard for public comment. In August 2000, the staff provided comments on the draft standard. These comments were developed using the guidelines described in SECY-00-0162, and considering the staff's 1999 comments on Revision 10 of the standard. In summary, the staff concluded that Revision 12 did not meet its needs. The complete set of staff comments was provided to the Commission on August 18, 2000. Since that time, the staff has been working with ASME and the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) to develop and implement a process for resolving the staff's comments. As part of this effort, a set of principles and objectives for the ASME standard was agreed upon; this was provided to the Commission on September 8, 2000.

On September 19-20, 2000, a small ASME task group (TG), composed of NRC staff and other PRA experts from the industry, met to address critical technical issues. The results of this meeting were discussed in a public meeting between the NRC's PRA Steering Committee and the NEI Risk-Informed Regulation Working Group on September 21, 2000. The ASME notes of the September 19-20, 2000, meeting are attached. In summary, the general conclusions of the TG are:

1. The stated principles/objectives for the standard are appropriate and it is possible to meet them.
2. While the content of Revision 12 addresses many of these objectives, problems exist in several areas. These problems are more specifically identified in the detailed comments (see attachment).

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- 3. Revision 12 should and can be modified to be acceptable to the stakeholders represented by the TG.

At the September 21, 2000, meeting, NRC and industry agreed that a six-month schedule to complete the standard would meet their needs. The staff will keep the Commission informed as the ASME effort proceeds.

cc: SECY
 OGC
 OCA
 OPA
 CIO
 CFO

Attachment: As stated

*SEE PREVIOUS CONCURRENCES

NAME: g:\comm-memo-asme-900.wpd

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Template= EDO-004 Accession Number ML003766671 Package ML003766693

