



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 28, 2001

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FROM:   
John W. Craig  
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

SUBJECT: GAS-TURBIN-MODULAR HELIUM REACTOR (GT-MHR) REVIEW

Attached are copies of three letters, on the subject topic, dated March 22, 2001, from Walter A. Simon, Sr. Vice President, General Atomics to: William D. Travers, William Magwood, DOE, and Joe Colvin, NEI. These letters were faxed to the OEDO, on March 26, 2001, from Ted Quinn, Vice President of MDM, and are provided to you for your information.

Attachment: As stated

cc: W. Travers, EDO (w/o attachment)      SECY (w/attachment)  
C. Paperiello, DEDMRS (w/o attachment)      OGC (w/attachment)  
W. Kane, DEDR (w/o attachment)      OCA (w/attachment)  
P. Norry, DEDM (w/attachment)      OPA (w/attachment)  
J. Craig, AO (w/attachment)      OIP (w/o attachment)  
I. Schoenfeld, OEDO (w/attachment)      EDO R/F (w/attachment)  
M. Satorius, OEDO (w/attachment)



March 22, 2001

Document Control Desk  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 2055-0001

Attn: Mr. William Travers

Subject: Gas Turbine – Modular Helium Reactor (GT-MHR) Review

Dear Mr. Travers

Since the mid-1990s, the design of a Gas Turbine – Modular Helium Reactor (GT-MHR) has been advancing under the sponsorship of the DOE, private moneys, and foreign sources. While this effort has been largely aimed at dispositioning surplus weapons plutonium, current conditions in the energy sector and proposed DOE budgets indicate that the time and markets may ready for introduction of advanced nuclear systems. Accordingly, General Atomics, with the DOE, is considering a plan at the commercialization of the GT-MHR.

The NRC's statement of Policy for Regulation of Advanced Nuclear Power Plants" (8 July 1986) encourages early interaction between the agency and applicants to provide licensing guidance. Consistent with this policy, General Atomics is requesting to engage in exploratory discussions on how to proceed with the licensing of the GT-MHR. We expect these discussions to address a Licensing Plan we will be developing later this fiscal year and preapplication issues such as:

- Importation of technology from the Russian Federation where the majority of design development is centered, and
- The degree to which an application could build on the approach to licensing bases and Preliminary Safety Information Document (PSID) of the steam cycle MHTGR submitted to and reviewed by the NRC during the 1980s.

In addition, we would anticipate identifying any unique policy issues, and establish an estimate of cost and schedule for subsequent interactions.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Dr. Arkal Shenoy at (858) 455-2552.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Walter A. Simon".

Walter A. Simon  
Sr. Vice President

Project: 30058  
GA/DOE-123-01



March 22, 2001

Mr. William Magwood  
Director  
U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology  
1000 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Dear Bill:

As you are aware, General Atomics is proceeding with plans for commercialization and deployment of the GA direct cycle Gas Turbine-Modular Helium Reactor (GT-MHR), following in the footsteps of the current DOE sponsored program for construction of a prototype GT-MHR for plutonium disposition in Russia. We have a commercialization plan including assembly of a Utility Advisory Board, pre-application review with NRC of generic gas reactor design and licensing issues in close coordination with Exelon, and participation in DOE, NRC, NEI and industry programs and forums for advanced nuclear plant deployment in the U.S. We would like to expand our dialogue with your staff in coordinating GA participation in DOE programs for near term deployment, gas reactor training, early plant siting, and other key issues in expanding the infrastructure for new nuclear deployment in the U.S.

This is a very important and exciting time in this industry and we look forward to using this design to help meet expanding U.S. and international energy needs in the coming years. We intend to meet with your people to address assumptions, policy issues, scheduling, generic approaches to modularization, optimized licensing, education and training and standardized costing methods.

Please advise if you have any questions or require additional information. We look forward to our participation in DOE sponsored programs in meeting the energy needs for the U.S. with a clean and reliable energy source.

If you have any questions, please call me or Dr. Arkal Shenoy at (858) 455-2552.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Walt".

Walter A. Simon  
Sr. Vice President

Project: 30058  
GA/NEI-122-01



March 22, 2001

Mr. Joe Colvin  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
Nuclear Energy Institute  
1776 I Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20006-2708

Dear Joe:

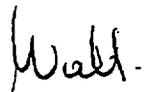
As you are aware, we are proceeding with plans for commercialization and deployment of the GA direct cycle Gas Turbine - Modular Helium Reactor (GT-MHR), following in the footsteps of the current DOE sponsored program for construction of a prototype GT-MHR for plutonium disposition in Russia. We have a commercialization plan including assembly of a Utility Advisory Board, pre-application review with NRC of generic gas reactor design issues in concert with Exelon, and participation in DOE, NRC, NEI and industry forums for advanced nuclear plant deployment in the U.S. We would like to expand our dialogue with your staff in coordinating NRC review of generic issues and inclusion of the GT-MHR footprint in the early plant siting program and other key goals of the "Strategic Plan for New Nuclear Generating Plants." We would also like to have full participation in NEI's near term deployment group.

This is a very important and exciting time in this industry and we look forward to using this design to help meet U.S and international energy goals in the coming years. We intend to meet with your people to address assumptions, policy issues, scheduling and generic approaches to modularization, optimized licensing, education and training and standardized cost and scheduling methods.

Please advise if you have any questions or require additional information. We look forward to our participation as an NEI member in meeting energy needs for the U.S. with a clean and reliable energy source.

If you have any questions, please call me or Dr. Arkal Shenoy at (858) 455-2552.

Sincerely yours,

  
Walter A. Simon  
Sr. Vice President