

May 29, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO: Stuart A. Richards, Director
Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

FROM: Jack Cushing, Project Manager, Section 2 */RA/*
Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF SEMIANNUAL MEETING HELD ON MAY 10, 2001,
WITH COMBUSTION ENGINEERING OWNERS GROUP EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE (TAC MB1806)

On May 10, 2001, the staff held a public meeting with the Combustion Engineering Owners Group (CEOG) Executive Committee at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) headquarters in Rockville, Maryland. The purpose of this meeting was to exchange information and to provide a forum for discussion of topics related to NRC and CEOG activities. Attachment 1 lists the meeting participants. The meeting slides are available on the NRC's website in ADAMS with the accession number ML011300509.

Feedback From NRR on CEOG Performance

Mr. Sam Collins (Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation) provided the opening remarks. He acknowledged the importance of the CEOG/NRC Senior Management Meetings as a forum to exchange ideas and provide feedback on the performance of both the NRC and the CEOG. The feedback from the staff is that the CEOG has been very cooperative and professional. The staff appreciates the openness and responsiveness of the CEOG during the reviews of topical reports (TRs). The staff feels that the TRs are an efficient use of resources; however, the CEOG members should follow through in a timely manner with license amendments that reference the TRs.

Mr. Collins asked if the CEOG has investigated working more closely with the other owners groups. Mr. Cruse stated that they are definitely studying the benefits that can be obtained from working with the Westinghouse Owners Group (WOG) especially since Westinghouse and Combustion Engineering have combined.

Mr. Collins said the CEOG is a leader in the area of risk-informed technical specifications (TSs) and their work in the risk-informed area has helped advance the state of risk-informed analysis. Risk-informing TSs reduces an unnecessary burden and maintains safety and its use in the control room has an immediate impact.

The staff has frequent and effective communication with the CEOG on technical, scheduling and process issues and we would like to encourage the staff and the CEOG to continue to do so.

CE Owners Group Report

Mr. Richard Bernier, Chairman of the CEOG, discussed their priorities and strategic technical issues. The priorities include collaboration between the CEOG and the WOG, project excellence and industry relationships. The CEOG and the WOG plan to work together on several new programs. The goals of the project excellence program are on-time and on-budget delivery of products with consistent quality. Part of the program is addressing resource issues. The resource issues include skill retention and maintenance of the CE design knowledge as experienced workers retire. Specifically, the following issues were discussed.

Management Update: Chairman - Dick Bernier
 Vice Chairman - Gary Pavis
 Steering Committee - Dave Pilmer, Jerry Holman

Chairman's Priorities: CEOG Synergies (collaboration with WOG), Project Excellence (project cost/benefit, skill retention), Industry Relationships (CEOG coordination with NRC, EPRI and NEI)

Strategic Issues: Steam generator integrity
 Design/licensing basis
 Plant performance
 Shorter refueling outages
 Operating and maintenance cost reduction
 Equipment obsolescence

Mr. Strosnider (Director of the Division of Engineering, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation), discussed the staff's efforts in the area of steam generator performance. Mr. Strosnider stated that the staff's steam generator plan is on the NRC's website and the staff expects to issue its safety evaluation (SE) on GL 97-06 by the end of the year.

TR Submittal/Approval Process Self Assessment

Mr. Weinkam of the CEOG discussed the self-assessment the CEOG is conducting to identify process improvements.

Mr. Collins asked if the staff was participating in the assessment and if the lessons learned by the assessment will be used to improve the process for the other owners groups. Mr. Weinkam replied that the CEOG was prepared to meet with the staff to discuss the areas where the CEOG and the NRC interact in the TR process. The lessons learned in this area could be shared with the other owners groups. The staff and the CEOG agreed to set up a public meeting to discuss the TR assessment process (*Action Item 1*).

The staff is interacting with the CEOG on their assessment in the areas where the CEOG and the NRC interact. Issues identified by both groups are:

- Review fees/fee waivers (up front determination).
- Identification of which licensees and when they plan to submit an amendment.
- Determine the process for license amendment submittal. Consolidated line item improvement process (CLIIP) or will licensees send in individual amendments.
- Timely submittal of Technical Specification Task Force Traveler (TSTF) once topical report has been approved.
- Implementation of TRs.

TR Status

CE NPSD-1184, "Joint Application Report for DC Power Allowed Outage Time Extension [AOT]"

The TR provides the technical justification to extend the AOT for either an inoperable battery or battery charger from 2 hours to 24 hours for SONGS and Waterford. The SE was issued on May 9, 2001.

CE NPSD-1186, "Technical Justification for the Risk-Informed Modification to Selected Required Action End States for CEOG PWRs"

The TR provides the technical basis to change the required end state for 27 TS from cold shutdown on shutdown cooling (Mode 5) to hot shutdown on steam generator cooling (Mode 4). CE NPSD-1186 supports Initiative 1 of the NRC's risk-informed regulation implementation plan (RIRIP). The SE should be issued by May 31, 2001.

CE NPSD-1198-P, "Low Alloy Steel Analyses to Support A600 / A690 Nozzle Repairs"

The purpose of this TR is to demonstrate that unacceptable degradation of the base metal does not occur when small diameter alloy 600 nozzles in the primary pressure boundaries of CEOG plants are repaired using half nozzle or mechanical seal nozzle assemblies (MNSA). Target date for the SE is August 2001.

CE NPSD-1199-P, "RCP Seal Failure Model"

The TR is the technical justification to reduce the calculated risk associated with a seal failure. Approval of the report will reduce calculated core damage frequency from RCP seal failures. The target date for the SE is September 2001. A call is scheduled to discuss the modeling assumptions.

CENPD-404-P, Rev 00, "Implementation of ZIRLO™ Cladding Material in CE Nuclear Power Fuel Designs"

Calvert Cliffs is interested in using CE fuel with ZIRLO™ cladding. The TR provides the technical justification to replace the ZR-4 cladding in CE fuel with ZIRLO™ cladding material. A

meeting between CE and the staff is scheduled for May 21, 2001. The staff is on schedule to meet the target date of August 15, 2001.

Fee Waivers

Mr. Weinkam asked about the status of the fee waivers that were requested for CE NPSD-994, -995 and -996, "Joint Application Reports for SIT, LPSI And EDG, AOT Extensions" and for CE NPSD-1186, "Technical Justification for the Risk-Informed Modification to Selected Required Action End States for CEOG PWRs." The staff stated that the status of the fee waivers is that the letter is in concurrence and should be issued soon. The staff stated that they would make sure that the letter is issued in the near term (*Action item 2*).

CRDM Cracking

Mr. Medoff of the NRC staff discussed the Oconee control rod drive mechanism (CRDM) cracking issue and its applicability to CE plants. The purpose of this presentation was to raise the awareness of this topic and not to request any specific response from the CEOG. Cracking has been found in the nozzles at Oconee Units 1 and 2. The main points of the presentation were:

- Crack growth rates in alloy 82/182 filler metals may be higher than those assumed for alloy 600 base metal materials.
- CE designed plants may not be capable of conducting visual walkdowns of the reactor head surface without removal of insulation materials.
- Failure of the CRDM nozzle has the potential to block control rod insertion.

The CEOG executives stated that they are aware of the issue and that a number of plants have inspected CRDM nozzles during recent outages and have not found any cracking.

Grid Reliability

Mr. Lazevnick of the NRC staff discussed grid reliability issues in light of the California grid situation. The purpose of this presentation was to discuss the issue with the CEOG executives and to hear their response to the grid reliability issues. Mr. Lazevnick stated that offsite power is the preferred power source for nuclear safety systems. In order to ensure that offsite power remains available, plants should establish a protocol with their transmission system operator to alert them to grid conditions outside their licensing basis (e.g., plant trip will result in inadequate switchyard voltages to support an accident event). The staff recognizes that there have been a number of voluntary industry initiatives including an NEI workshop on grid reliability.

The executives appreciated an opportunity to discuss the topic. A number of executives stated that their plants had agreements with their transmission system operator to prevent them from entering a degraded condition. They also stated that they are participating in a voluntary industry initiative with the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) to evaluate their plants against industry recommendations for grid reliability.

Closing

The CEOG and the staff captured the action items agreed upon in the meeting. The action items are:

1. The staff and the CEOG agreed to set up a public meeting to discuss the TR assessment process.
2. The staff will make sure that the fee waiver letter is issued soon.

The next meeting between the CEOG and NRC management is scheduled for November 15, 2001.

Project No. 692

Attachment: List of Attendees

cc w/att: See next page

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Project No. 692

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MEETING WITH COMBUSTION ENGINEERING OWNERS GROUP

MAY 10, 2001

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C. Brinkman
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R. Etling
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E. Weinkam
G. Overbeck
C. Cruse
S. Lurie

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