

June 11, 2001

Dr. George E. Apostolakis, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO THE MAY 18, 2001, ACRS LETTER, "REPORT ON THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION FOR ARKANSAS NUCLEAR ONE, UNIT 1"

Dear Dr. Apostolakis:

Thank you for your letter to Chairman Meserve dated May 18, 2001, outlining the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) conclusions and recommendations regarding the safety aspects of the license renewal application for Arkansas Nuclear One, Unit 1 (ANO-1). The staff appreciates that the ACRS devoted significant effort to reviewing the renewal application and staff safety evaluation.

The ACRS concluded that adequate programs have been established to manage the effects of aging so that ANO-1 can be operated safely in accordance with its current licensing basis for the extended license term. The ACRS made the following recommendations for future improvements to the license renewal process:

1. The ANO-1 application identifies cracking at welded joints of the control rod drive mechanism (CRDM) pressure boundary as an aging effect to be managed. Appendix B of the application describes the aging management program instituted to deal with this aging degradation mechanism; i.e., "the CRDM nozzle and other vessel closure penetration inspection program." This program identifies primary water stress corrosion cracking of Alloy 600 nozzles with partial penetration welds as the aging effect of concern and ties programmatic elements, such as the frequency of inspections, to the results of plant-specific and sister plant inspection findings. The ACRS concluded that, although the initiatives in this program are adequate to deal with this identified aging effect, the current efforts to correct recent observations of circumferential cracking in CRDM nozzle penetrations may require some future revisions to the program.
2. The ACRS also recommended that the staff determine whether the proposed guidance in NUREG-1801, "Generic Aging Lessons Learned (GALL) Report," which was presented to the Commission for approval in SECY-01-0074, should be revised to incorporate the lessons learned from the ANO-1 application regarding the aging management of small-bore piping and medium-voltage buried cable.

The staff expects to learn more effective, efficient, and realistic ways to manage aging effects, particularly when emerging technical issues are involved, (circumferential cracking in CRDM

penetrations, for example). It is likely that generic improvements in aging management practices will be developed separately from the license renewal reviews. The staff will incorporate the improvements into the GALL in a timely manner.

The staff appreciates the support and excellent working relationship the Committee has provided to the license renewal program. The staff will continue to work closely with the ACRS to identify and develop appropriate improvements to the guidance with ample opportunities for stakeholder participation. Please let me know if the Committee has any further questions or comments.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

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

The staff expects to learn more effective, efficient, and realistic ways to manage aging effects, particularly when emerging technical issues are involved, (circumferential cracking in CRDM penetrations, for example). It is likely that generic improvements in aging management practices will be developed separately from the license renewal reviews. The staff will incorporate the improvements into the GALL in a timely manner.

The staff appreciates the support and excellent working relationship the Committee has provided to the license renewal program. The staff will continue to work closely with the ACRS to identify and develop appropriate improvements to the guidance with ample opportunities for stakeholder participation. Please let me know if the Committee has any further questions or comments.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

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



Package Accession Number: ML011570063

Incoming Accession Number: ML011410398

Response Accession Number: ML011570112

Distribution: See next page

*See previous concurrence

C:\Program Files\Adobe\Acrobat 4.0\PDF Output\gt20010208 rev.wpd

OFFICE	RLSB	Tech Ed	LA	SC: RLSB	RLSB: BC
NAME	JECarrasco	PKleene	EHylton	PT Kuo	CIGrimes
DATE	05/30/01*	5/30 /01*	5/30/01*	6/05/01*	6/05/01*
OFFICE	DRIP:D	ADIP	EDO		
NAME	DBMatthews (FGillespie for)	RWBorchardt	WDTravers		
DATE	6/06/01*	6/07/01*	6/11/01		

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

Distribution: **G20010208**

Travers

EDO

NRR Mail Room

DRIP R/F

RLSB R/F

Paperiello

Kane

Norry

Reiter

Graig

Burns/Cyr

Merschhoff, RIV

Schoenfeld, OEDOA

Collins

Johnson

Matthews

Grimes

Hylton

Coates

ACRS File

Carrasco