

June 22, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO: Gary M. Holahan, DSSA/NRR
Richard H. Wessman, DE/NRR
Michael Cullingford, NRR
Eugene Imbro, DE/NRR

FROM: Glenn B. Kelly, Sr. Reliability and Risk Analyst, SPSB/DSSA/NRR **/RA/**

SUBJECT: TRIP REPORT - ICON 9, NICE, FRANCE

I attended the Ninth International Conference on Nuclear Engineering (ICON 9) from April 8th to 12th this year in Nice, France. At the conference I presented two papers: one on estimates of the risk at decommissioning plants in the U.S. and the other on the NRC's recently adopted design basis radiological source term. Both sessions were well attended, and the audience asked a number of probing questions. These papers, especially the one on decommissioning plant risk, which was the first probabilistic risk assessment of a decommissioned nuclear power plant, provided the public with information that should improve public confidence in the decision making process at the NRC.

The primary purpose of my trip was to enhance my understanding of light water reactor, breeder reactor, and gas cooled reactor safety in the context of maintaining safety and improving efficiency and effectiveness. To this end I attended seminars on decontamination of nuclear reactors, seismic analysis, sodium fires, safety assessments of VVER and RBMK reactors, brittle fracture, waste management, and economics of advanced reactors. There were many parallel meetings (about 10 sessions in parallel) requiring one to shuttle back and forth to be able to catch the best presentations. The presentations generally were of high quality and many sessions were well attended. Over 500 papers were presented at ICON 9.

I also attended a number of panel sessions including those on the new era in nuclear energy development, the spent fuel issue: how to manage it, regulatory challenges, deregulation and consolidation, and the future of the nuclear industry. Of particular note was the panel session on communication challenges for nuclear acceptability. One of the participants, Ms. Daniels, works for ESKOM in South Africa. She was able to provide me information on their pebble bed reactor design and is a good contact on this potential future US nuclear power plant design.

In addition I made contacts with many visiting scientists, engineers, and managers. Nice was nice.

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