

Mr. Casey C. Grant, P.E.
Assistant Vice President
Codes and Standards Administration
NFPA International
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02269-9101

February 5, 2002

Dear Mr. Grant:

In accordance with Section 4-1 of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Regulations Governing Committee Projects, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requests that the NFPA Standards Council direct the Technical Committee on Fire Protection for Nuclear Facilities to initiate work on a new NFPA standard to address fire protection requirements for new reactor designs not within the scope of the existing NFPA standards. The existing NFPA standards on nuclear reactor fire protection (i.e.; NFPA 804 and NFPA 805) apply only to the advanced light water reactor designs and the existing operating reactors in the U. S. There are currently no consensus fire protection standards available for the new reactor designs such as the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR), and the Gas Turbine-Modular Helium Reactor (GT-MHR). The NRC has been informed that the industry is interested in licensing some of these new designs, both in the U. S. and abroad. The NRC requests that the scope of the proposed new standard be limited to those fire protection requirements necessary to ensure safe shutdown capability and minimize the potential for the release of radioactive materials to the environment in the event of a fire. The standard should address all the presently contemplated new reactor designs, including gas cooled reactor, heavy water moderated reactor, and fast reactor designs. The standard should be risk-informed and performance-based to the extent that such methods have been demonstrated to be valid for the new designs. If successfully developed the standard could be adopted by the NRC through rulemaking for the new reactor designs in accordance with the National Technology Transfer Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-113).

The NRC staff has previously discussed this request with Mr. Wayne Holmes, Chair of the Technical Committee on Fire Protection for Nuclear Facilities. As it has in the past, the NRC will assign staff to support the technical committee in the development of the new NFPA standard. The NRC hopes the NFPA Standards Council will consider this request promptly. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Mr. Edward A. Connell of my staff at 301-415-2838.

Sincerely,

/RA/ S. Black for:

Gary M. Holahan, Director
Division of Systems Safety and Analysis
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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