

February 13, 2002

Dr. William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

SUBJECT: THE REVISED REACTOR OVERSIGHT PROCESS

Dear Dr. Travers:

Your letter of January 10, 2002, provided the staff's responses and planned actions related to the report from the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) dated October 12, 2001. In that report, we provided the results of our review of the revised Reactor Oversight Process (ROP). In general, we concur with the staff's responses to our concerns. However, we continue to believe that some of the threshold values for risk-based performance indicators (PIs) are not meaningful. It is important that the thresholds adequately reflect the levels at which NRC will take action and the urgency with which this action will be taken. Some of the current thresholds do not do this. Also, further discussion is needed regarding the assessment of concurrent findings. Finally, as requested in the SRM dated December 20, 2001, we need to discuss performance deficiencies and apparent conflicts and discrepancies between elements of the ROP which are risk-informed (e.g., significance determination process) and those that are performance-based (e.g., PIs).

We look forward to working with the staff to assist in further development of the ROP.

Sincerely,

/RA/

George E. Apostolakis
Chairman

References:

1. Letter dated January 10, 2002, from William D. Travers, Executive Director for Operations, NRC, to George E. Apostolakis, Chairman, ACRS, Subject: The Revised Reactor Oversight Process.
2. Letter dated October 12, 2001, from George E. Apostolakis, Chairman, ACRS, to Richard A. Meserve, Chairman, NRC, Subject: The Revised Reactor Oversight Process.