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DOCKET NUMBER  
PROPOSED RULE **Chapter 1**  
(67FR57084)

Ref: 67 FR 57120  
67 FR 57084

STARS-02020

DOCKETED  
USNRC

October 24, 2002

November 6, 2002 (11:18AM)

Secretary,  
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff  
Washington, DC 20555

OFFICE OF SECRETARY  
RULEMAKINGS AND  
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

**STRATEGIC TEAMING AND RESOURCE SHARING (STARS)  
COMMENTS ON PROPOSED RULE AND DIRECT FINAL RULE,  
“ELECTRONIC MAINTENANCE AND SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION”**

Gentlemen:

This letter provides comments from the Strategic Teaming and Resource Sharing (STARS)<sup>1</sup> nuclear power plants on both the direct final rule and the proposed rule addressing electronic maintenance and submission of information and the associated guidance published as appendix A to the direct final rule. We understand that the course of the direct final rule was changed during an NRC and stakeholders meeting held October 3, 2002. Many of the issues STARS is commenting on may now be in the process of resolution through the proposed rule process.

The purpose of the revised rule is to allow the electronic submittal of documents to the NRC. The rule removes requirements from the 10 CFR that strictly prohibit electronic submittals. However, the rule continues to allow hard copy submittals as well. It also designates allowable electronic media and presents an appendix that provides specific submittal guidance.

STARS plants agree with the intent of the revised regulation. However, STARS believes that some of the limitations and requirements imposed on licensees by the guidance portion of the publication are severely burdensome (e.g., hardcopy requirement when submitting a CD-ROM and format limitations). These issues are in direct conflict with RIS 2001-05, “Guidance on Submitting Documents to the NRC by Electronic Information Exchange or on CD-ROM.” The RIS was

<sup>1</sup> STARS is an alliance of six plants (eleven nuclear units) operated by TXU Energy, AmerenUE, Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, STP Nuclear Operating Company and Arizona Public Service Company.

welcomed and implemented by the nuclear industry since issuance. These changes from the RIS would impose burden that has not been conclusively justified. Therefore, STARS strongly encourages the NRC to continue discussion and resolution with stakeholders to resolve the concerns identified during the meeting and documented in this correspondence.

Specific comments are categorized and are listed in order of importance to STARS. However, if taken in total, the comments on the requirements proposed through the direct final rule and guidance appendix would impose a burden that will be quite costly to implement. These comments specifically speak to Licensing Basis Documents (LBDs), such as the Updated Safety Analysis Report. The impact on large document types results in the greatest concern.

1. Sections 2.12 and 4.3;

These sections stipulate that CD-ROM submissions must be accompanied by one paper copy. Many utilities have pursued a policy of replacing its paperwork with a more efficient electronic system to the greatest extent possible. To this end, the hard copies of the LBDs have been replaced with an electronic version. This was supported with the issuance of RIS 2001-05, "Guidance for Submitting Documents to the NRC by Electronic Information Exchange or on CD-ROM," in January of 2001. RIS 2001-05 specifically stated, "Electronic submittals need not be accompanied by a paper copy." As a result of this guidance, many utilities submitted all electronic Updated Final Safety Analysis Reports (UFSARs). Subsequently, other LBDs (Technical Specifications and Bases, Technical Requirements Manual and Bases, Emergency Plan, Fire Protection Report, In-service Test Program, Offsite Dose Calculation Manual, COLR and PTLR) have also been converted and submitted electronically. In some cases, a hard copy of the UFSAR does not exist. Site access to the UFSAR (and the other LBDs) is through an intranet, the Internet, or a CD-ROM copy. A major benefit associated with electronic versions of large documents, such as the UFSAR, is not producing the first hard copy. The incremental cost of reproducing multiple hard copies, although costly, is small compared to the cost of creating the first copy. The new draft guidance therefore negates this significant benefit afforded by RIS 2001-05. For licensees who have gone to pure electronic LBDs, to comply with this new guidance would require a complete reprint of the UFSAR (a range of 1000 to 8000 pages of text and figures) each time a certified update is required to be submitted. The hard copy requirement for this type of document (UFSAR) appears unreasonable and burdensome. The revised rule does allow for page revision submittals if the submittal is by hard copy (section 4.3.3). This allowance is not available when electronically submitted by CD-ROM. However, if allowed, would create a disparity between the forms of the document submitted and the NRC's official record.

2. Section 2.8;

Section 2.8 indicates that object linking is not acceptable. The industry trend has been to enhance electronic LBD search and use capabilities by incorporating more and more links; both within the same file and to other files. The availability of these navigation links makes the electronic UFSAR particularly useful and user friendly. An example of links to other

files is UFSAR figure links. UFSAR figure files may be located in a directory separate from the directory containing the UFSAR text and tables. Figures may also be contained within the chapter file itself. However, the existing file structure for the figures is usually laid out in a very understandable format (i.e., by chapter). It would be impractical to revise the file structure to incorporate those figure files into the chapter file for the text/tables or delete the links within the files themselves. In addition licensees would then be faced with maintaining two separate documents; one with links and one without.

### 3. Sections 2.1 and 2.5;

The \*\* note in Section 2.1 and note "a" in Section 2.5 indicate that the PDF (formerly known as PDF normal) format is not acceptable for conversion of scanned images. It is understood that this requirement was added to ensure the maximum ability to search documents in the PDF format. However, there are some situations where PDF scanned images should be acceptable. For example, UFSAR figures (which may contain some text information) may only exist as scanned images. In addition, there may be historical reference material not available electronically (such as industry codes and standards) or letters that contain a signature that only exist in a scanned format. The above are examples when the need to search is either not necessary, or, where the only available format is a non-OCR image, and thus should be acceptable. These images however are required to meet requirements for records retention and are therefore, legible in the PDF format.

### 4. Section 2.1;

This section specifies the Adobe version that is acceptable (4.05 or earlier). The version of Adobe that is used to create the document should be dictated by the ability to read the files with available reader software available on the Internet for free. By specifying the version of the Adobe creation software, the NRC is forcing restrictions on licensee operating systems. For example if a licensee upgrades the LBD authoring software to Word XP due to an upgrade to Window XP, Adobe Acrobat 4.05 will no longer work and it is necessary to upgrade to Adobe Acrobat 5.0. Regardless of which version of Adobe used however, PDF formatted documents can be read by any of the versions of Acrobat Reader software. Therefore, Adobe version should not be dictated. In addition, many CD-ROMs used to transmit the PDF formatted documents, also contain a copy of the appropriate reader software.

### 5. Section 2.3

The draft guidance states that the 20 MB file size limitation is to aid viewing and downloading. Breaking single files into two or more files would reduce the viewing, navigating and searching capabilities. Therefore, although download time may be a bit longer for a larger, single PDF file, it would be off set by the increased capabilities. Therefore, STARS recommends increasing the allowed file size to file size limit of 100 MB.

6. Section 2.12 and 10 CFR 72.4

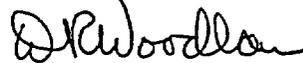
The proposed guidance states that the number of copies of CD-ROMS for submittal must be the same number of copies as required by the applicable regulation. The Part 72 regulations currently do not specify the numbers of required copies of submittals. The number of copies requested by the NRC has been inconsistent. Specifying the numbers of required copies in the regulations would aid licensees and certificate holders in planning and budgeting for submittals.

Summary;

Licensees revised the process by which LBDs and their updates are transmitted to the NRC based on NRC guidance provided by RIS 2001-05. This guidance enabled many licensees to eliminate all hard copies of the UFSAR. The conversion of LBDs to an electronic format involved a significant expenditure of resources and cannot be easily revised to comply with some of the formatting requirements contained in the Appendix to the direct final rule. Since issuance of the RIS, LBDs have been regularly transmitted on CD-ROM in accordance with that guidance and were found to be acceptable by the NRC. Since there has been no previous feedback to the industry, the analysis in the direct final rule does not conclusively justify the burden that will be imposed on Licensees for documents such as the UFSAR. The guidance contained in this proposed rule would re-impose the requirement to submit a paper copy of the LBDs, and impose electronic formatting requirements that previously did not exist. This will cause significant burden to licensees and nullify any improvements made to the ability to search and view LBDs.

The STARS plants appreciate the opportunity to comment on this direct final rule (and the proposed rule) and again encourage the NRC to resolve the issues through dialogue with stakeholders. If there are any questions regarding these comments, please contact me at 254-897-6887 or email me at [dwoodl1@txu.com](mailto:dwoodl1@txu.com).

Sincerely,



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STARS