

March 20, 2003

Dr. Po Kee Wong, Chief Executive Officer
Systems Research Company
2413 Spencer Road
Silver Spring, Md. 20910-2344

Dear Dr. Wong:

I have been requested by Dr. William Travers, Executive Director of Operations, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), to respond to your February 28, 2003, email to him and Mr. Ashok Thadani, Director, Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research. In your email, you requested the NRC consider your submission as a "formal business request and as a formal application with open technical challenges to the current computer codes being used by all nuclear industries worldwide."

Concerning your formal business request, the NRC regulates the nation's civilian use of byproduct, source, and special nuclear materials through a system of licensing and regulatory activities including: (1) licensing the design, construction, operation, and decommissioning of nuclear plants and other nuclear facilities; (2) licensing the possession, use, processing, handling, and exporting of nuclear materials; (3) licensing the siting, design, construction, operation, and closure of low-level disposal sites under NRC jurisdiction and the construction, operation, and closure of the geologic repositories for high-level radioactive waste; and (4) licensing the operators of civilian nuclear reactors. The NRC does not enter into business agreements of the type you are requesting.

Concerning your technical challenge to the current computer codes being used by all nuclear industries, the NRC's interest in these codes is in their ability to predict accurately and with adequate margin the complex phenomena that nuclear facilities experience during both normal operational evolutions, and during design basis accident scenarios. It has been our experience that the current generation of computer codes provide sufficient understanding of these evolutions and scenarios to assure public health and safety are maintained.

The NRC's mission does include reviewing computer codes to assure the continued safe operation of nuclear facilities in the United States and the agency will review and respond to specific concerns from external stakeholders related to these codes. However, in the absence of any specific information related to non-conservatism in these codes, the NRC is unable to take any action in response to your general technical challenge to current computer codes.

I thank you for your interest in NRC activities.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Brian W. Sheron, Associate Director
for Project Licensing and Technical Analysis
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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Brian W. Sheron, Associate Director
for Project Licensing and Technical Analysis
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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NRR Template - 106 ADAMS Accession Numbers - **Letter- ML030650161**
Incoming: ML030640021 Package: ML030710136

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