

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

August 7, 1997

**NRC INFORMATION NOTICE 97-63: STATUS OF NRC STAFF'S REVIEW OF  
BWRVIP-05**

Addressees

All holders of operating licenses or construction permits for boiling water reactors (BWRs).

Purpose

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing this information notice to inform addressees about the status of NRC staff's review of "BWR Vessel and Internals Project, BWR Reactor Pressure Vessel Shell Weld Inspection Recommendations (BWRVIP-05)." This information notice does not transmit or imply any new or changed requirements or staff positions. No specific action or written response is required.

Discussion

On May 12, 1997, the NRC staff and members of the Boiling Water Reactor Vessel and Internals Project (BWRVIP) met with the Commission to discuss the NRC staff's review of the BWRVIP's proprietary report, "BWR Vessel and Internals Project, BWR Reactor Pressure Vessel Shell Weld Inspection Recommendations (BWRVIP-05)," dated September 28, 1995. This report questions the extent of augmented reactor vessel inspection required in 10 CFR Part 50, 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)(A)(2). In accordance with guidance provided by the Commission following that meeting, in Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM) M970512B, dated May 30, 1997, the staff has initiated a broader, risk-informed review of the BWRVIP-05 proposal. Further, the final safety evaluation report (SER) will need to be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) prior to issuance. Based on the NRC staff's review of the BWRVIP-05 report, the staff has concluded that the industry's assessment does not sufficiently address risk, and additional work is necessary to provide a complete risk-informed evaluation. Therefore, the NRC staff's current estimate is that completion of this effort, including industry input and ACRS review, will take approximately six months.

One result of the additional review performed to date was the identification of a transient at a foreign BWR of U.S. design in which the reactor pressure vessel (RPV) was subjected to high pressure at a low temperature. This cold over-pressure transient was not included as a design-basis event for BWRs nor was it considered from a risk perspective in the BWRVIP-05 report. However, the recognition of this transient has led the staff to determine that cold over-pressure transients are of sufficient safety significance that they need to be addressed

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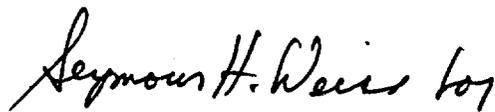
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as part of the BWRVIP-05 review. Therefore, the staff intends to request an industry evaluation of the potential for, and consequences of, nondesign-basis events which were not addressed in the BWRVIP-05 submittal.

In order for the additional analysis requested by the Commission to be completed and reviewed, the staff will consider technically-justified requests for reliefs from the augmented examination in accordance with 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3)(i), 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3)(ii), and 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)A(5) from BWR licensees who are scheduled to perform inspections of the BWR RPV circumferential shell welds during the Fall 1997 or Spring 1998 outage seasons. Acceptably-justified reliefs would be considered for inspection delays of up to two operating cycles for BWR RPV circumferential shell welds only. Licensees will still need to perform their required inspections of "essentially 100 percent" of all axial welds.

Granting reliefs for 40-months or two operating cycles is based on the consideration of the availability of inspection equipment and the need for licensees to reschedule inspections if they should be deemed necessary upon completion of the risk-informed evaluation. Licensees should be aware that if the NRC staff determines at the conclusion of its review of the BWRVIP-05 proposal that inspections of the BWR RPV circumferential shell welds are necessary, any licensee who seeks and receives schedular relief will be required to perform the inspections at the first reasonable opportunity.

This information notice requires no specific action or written response. If you have any questions about the information in this notice, please contact the person listed below or the appropriate NRC Regional Office.

  
Marylee M. Slosson, Acting Director  
Division of Reactor Program Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Technical contact: C. E. Carpenter, NRR  
301-415-2169  
E-mail: cec@nrc.gov

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| Information Notice No. | Subject  | Date of Issuance | Issued to  |
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| 97-62                  | Unrecognized Reactivity Addition During Plant Shutdown   | 08/06/97         | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors   |
| 97-61                  | U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Letter, to Medical Device Manufacturers, on the Year 2000 Problem   | 08/06/97         | All U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission medical licensees, veterinarians, and manufacturers/distributors of medical devices |
| 97-60                  | Incorrect Unreviewed Safety Question Determination Related to Emergency Core Cooling System Swapover from the Injection Mode to the Recirculation Mode | 08/01/97         | All holders of OLs or CPs for pressurized-water reactors   |
| 97-59                  | Fire Endurance Test Results of Versawrap Fire Barriers   | 08/01/97         | All holders of OLs or CPs for nuclear power reactors   |
| 97-58                  | Mechanical Integrity of In-Situ Leach Injection Wells and Piping   | 07/31/97         | Holders of and Applicants for Licenses for In-Situ Leach Facilities  |
| 97-57                  | Leak Testing of Packaging Used in the Transport of Radioactive Material  | 07/30/97         | Suppliers and users of packaging for the transportation of radioactive material required to perform packaging leak tests   |

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OL = Operating License  
CP = Construction Permit

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original signed by S.H. Weiss for  
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