

July 2, 2003

Dr. Mario V. Bonaca, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

SUBJECT: ACRS REVIEW OF PROPOSED REVISIONS OF REGULATORY GUIDE 1.178,
"AN APPROACH FOR PLANT-SPECIFIC RISK-INFORMED
DECISIONMAKING FOR INSERVICE INSPECTION OF PIPING," AND THE
ASSOCIATED STANDARD REVIEW PLAN CHAPTER 3.9.8

Dear Dr. Bonaca:

The staff thanks the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards for its letter of recommendation of May 16, 2003, regarding the staff's proposed revisions to Regulatory Guide 1.178 and the related Standard Review Plan (SRP) Chapter 3.9.8. The staff briefed the ACRS on the revisions proposed for these two documents on May 8, 2003. In your letter several observations and recommendations were provided regarding the topic of risk-informed inservice inspection. We agree with these observations and recommendations. The staff's response to the recommendations are provided below.

- (1) ACRS Recommendation: The draft final RG 1.178 and associated SRP Section 3.9.8 should be issued.

Staff Response: The staff intends to proceed with preparations to issue the revised documents. The current schedule calls for completion of this task in August 2003.

- (2) ACRS Recommendation: The staff should consider undertaking a study in which EPRI, Westinghouse Owners Group (WOG), and French methodologies are applied to the same piping system and the resulting inspection plans are compared to gain a better understanding of the impact of different approaches.

Staff Response: The staff agrees that such a study would potentially provide useful insights and will investigate the resources required to perform the study. The staff will provide an update on its plans to the ACRS by the end of this year (CY 2003).

M. V. Bonaca

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We appreciate the Committee's comments and insights and look forward to additional discussions.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
SECY

M. V. Bonaca

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We appreciate the Committee's comments and insights and look forward to additional discussions.

Sincerely,
/RA/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
SECY

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* Previously concurred