

June 23, 2003

Mr. William A. Horin
Winston and Strawn
1400 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3502

Dear Mr. Horin:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has reviewed your letter, dated May 16, 2003, on behalf of the Nuclear Utility Group on Equipment Qualification (NUGEQ) regarding clarifications of NRC guidance in Regulatory Issue Summary 2001-09, "Control of Hazard Barriers." Specifically, you asked the NRC to confirm the reasonableness and acceptability of the proposed questions and answers attached to your letter. You also stated that these questions and answers would aid utilities in implementing the guidance in RIS 2001-09. The staff did not perform an acceptability review, however, the staff has concluded that the proposed questions and answers appear to be consistent with the intentions of RIS 2001-09.

As you might be aware, the staff is currently developing a revision to Generic Letter 91-18 and reviewing risk-informed technical specification (TS) initiative 7, Non TS Support System Impact of TS LCOs. The revision to GL 91-18, regarding degraded and non conforming conditions and operability determinations, will briefly discuss RIS 2001-09 and hazard barriers. Risk-informed initiative 7 is a Technical Specification Task Force (TSTF) initiative which has proposed a new TS Limiting Condition for Operation (LCO) 3.0.9 to allow up to 30 days for barriers that cannot provide their related support function, as long as the risk is assessed and managed. The proposed industry TSTF for this change is TSTF-427 (ADAMS accession number ML030660070). The staff intends to consider the applicability of your proposed questions and answers in the development of the activities discussed above.

Please contact me at (301) 415-1161 or e-mail wdb@nrc.gov if you have any questions or need further information on these proposed changes.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William D. Beckner, Program Director
Operating Reactor Improvements Program
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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DATE	06/20/2003	06/20/2003	06/20/2003	06/23/2003