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FRAMATOME ANP, Inc.

October 17, 2003
NRC:03:068

Dr. Ashok C. Thadani, Director
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

ANL High Burnup Test Program

Dear Dr. Thadani:

Framatome ANP wants you to know that we endorse the letter sent to you by David J. Modeen of EPRI on September 9, 2003 concerning the Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) High Burnup Test Program. Two representatives from Framatome ANP actively participate in this program by assisting in the establishment of test procedures. In addition, we have supplied both Zircaloy-4 and M5 cladding material for this testing program. Cladding supplied by Framatome ANP is also being used in the tests associated with the long-term environment in dry cask storage containers.

Framatome ANP concurs with the concern expressed by EPRI that the ANL High Burnup LOCA Test Program, as constituted, may not provide data suitable to confirm the applicability of the current cladding embrittlement criteria. Specifically, impact testing has not been included in the current program. We urge that impact tests be incorporated to provide a basis to confirm the applicability of the embrittlement criteria established in 1988 for high burnup fuel.

Framatome ANP anticipates discussing this matter with members of your staff.

Very truly yours,

James F. Mallay, Director
Regulatory Affairs

cc: F. Eltawila
A. Marion (NEI)
R. O. Meyer
J. E. Rosenthal
J. S. Wermiel