

April 2, 2004

MEMORANDUM TO: James E. Dyer, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

FROM: Ashok C. Thadani, Director /RA/
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO USER NEED REQUEST FOR SUPPORT IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD PROCEDURES AND METHODS
FOR RISK ASSESSMENT OF INSPECTION FINDINGS AND
REACTOR INCIDENTS (NRR-2004-005)

The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to your user need request dated February 17, 2004, titled, "User Need Request for Support in the Development of Standard Procedures and Methods for Risk Assessment of Inspection Findings and Reactor Incidents." We agree that the tasks in the user need memorandum to develop procedures and methods that will be utilized by staff from our offices and the regions to achieve more consistent results when performing risk assessments are important. We will support the scope of work requested without displacing other user need requests.

To meet the project objectives stated in the user need request (consistency and efficiency of risk assessments of operating experience), the Significance Determination Process (SDP) and Accident Sequence Precursor (ASP) processes should be examined by both offices and changes should be made where practical to achieve these objectives. Procedures should be revised and approved by the cognizant offices to implement proposed changes in the ASP and SDP processes. Tools and guidelines produced as a result of this user need request can be used to help implement the approved procedures.

The documentation of existing methods used in the risk analysis of internal events (Task 1, "Development guidelines for the analysis of internal events during power operations") is straightforward. However, Task 2, "Development of new methods and guidelines," for external events (fires, flooding, seismic, high wind-related events), internal events during low power and shutdown operations, and the calculation of large early release frequency (LERF) will require much more development effort. Some of this work is already underway. We plan to continue to develop these methods and guidelines in an iterative process that will provide interim guidelines that can be used while more rigorous methods and guidelines are developed.

As the result of discussions with your staff, it is our understanding that Task 3, "Make SPAR model and GEM enhancements," includes enhancement of all Standardized Plant Analysis Risk (SPAR) Revision 3 models to the same level of detail as the SPAR models used in the Mitigating Systems Performance Index pilot plant applications and includes model upgrades to address the issues identified in subtask 3.1, "SPAR model enhancement procedures."

We expect to be able to provide ongoing support as requested in Task 4, "Provide ongoing technical support;" however, this support involves level of effort and scheduling considerations that must be developed on a case-by-case basis consistent with available resources at the time of request.

The user need request includes dates for preparation of several deliverables associated with Tasks 1 and 3. We are not able to meet these dates based on currently available resources. Our original plan that was discussed with your staff during the drafting of this user need request was to complete most of the procedures and guideline tasks on the order of 12 months after the issuance of the user need request. We will develop a detailed plan to produce the deliverables in accordance with this understanding. We should be able to support a completion date of April 2006 for subtask 3.2, "SPAR model modifications."

Coordination between our offices is important in order for this project to succeed. I am requesting that a project management team be established to oversee the planning, development, and implementation of the project task items. This team should be represented by a key member from the Operating Experience Risk Analysis Branch (OERAB/RES), Inspection Program Branch (IIPB/NRR), and Probabilistic Safety Assessment Branch (SPSB/NRR). Regional staff will also be involved as needed. The charter of this team should include:

- Agreeing to schedules for intermediate and final deliverables based on available resource and funding,
- Providing specifications and details of each of the tasks within the framework and scope of the user need request,
- Proposing changes and associated procedures for the ASP and SDP programs for management approval,
- Providing a liaison with potential users and reviewers of the products, and
- Meeting regularly and documenting meeting minutes to keep users and management informed of changes and status of the work.

I recommend that the project management team provide a detailed list of milestones and deliverables by September 2004. The significant milestones will then be tracked in our office operating plan. The office point of contact for this project is Michael Cheok (415-7496).

cc: C. Paperiello, DEDMRS
S. Collins, DEDR
B. Sheron, NRR
S. Black, NRR
B. Boger, NRR
M. Tschiltz, NRR
S. Richards, NRR

MEMORANDUM DATED: 4/2/04

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO USER NEED REQUEST FOR SUPPORT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD PROCEDURES AND METHODS FOR RISK ASSESSMENT OF INSPECTION FINDINGS AND REACTOR INCIDENTS (NRR-2004-005)

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RESPONSE TO USER NEED REQUEST FOR SUPPORT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD PROCEDURES AND METHODS FOR RISK ASSESSMENT OF INSPECTION FINDINGS AND REACTOR INCIDENTS

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