

May 27, 2004

Mr. Samuel G. McDonald, Manager  
Westinghouse Electric Company  
Commercial Nuclear Fuel Division  
P.O. Drawer R  
Columbia, SC 29250

Dear Mr. McDonald:

We received your letter of September 29, 2003 (LTR-RAC-03-44), as your response to U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Bulletin 2003-003 (BL-2003-003), "Potentially Defective 1-Inch Valves for Uranium Hexafluoride Cylinders," dated August 29, 2003. NRC has reviewed your response and approves your proposal for continuing to process non-Westinghouse-owned cylinders with Hunt valves installed, for a period not to exceed 36 months from the date of issuance of BL-2003-003.

Consistent with NRC's recent approval of a proposal by the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC), Westinghouse may continue to receive shipments from USEC of uranium hexafluoride ( $UF_6$ )-filled cylinders, with Hunt valves installed. These shipments arise from USEC's role in utilizing the downblended  $UF_6$  produced from highly enriched Russian uranium in the Megatons to Megawatts program. USEC has committed to shipping such  $UF_6$ -filled cylinders with Hunt valves installed for a period not to exceed 36 months from issuance of BL-2003-003. Accordingly, NRC approves Westinghouse processing of  $UF_6$  cylinders with Hunt valves installed to the extent that such cylinders may be included in USEC shipments under the Megatons to Megawatts program. NRC understands that this will involve a prolongation of the incremental risk posed by continued use of cylinders with Hunt valves installed, but that Westinghouse will be able to minimize this risk through careful implementation of the safety procedures described in its response to Requested Action **D** of BL-2003-003.

NRC understands that under Westinghouse's alternative proposal, no  $UF_6$ -filled cylinders will be shipped with Hunt valves installed beyond a 12-month transition period following issuance of BL-2003-003, but that helium cylinders with Hunt valves installed may continue to be shipped for a period of 3 to 4 years after issuance of BL-2003-003. NRC notes that shipment of cylinders

S. G. McDonald

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containing only heel quantities of UF<sub>6</sub> (ref. Requested Action **D** of BL-2003-003) is regulated by DOT and not NRC. Thus, NRC neither approves nor disapproves your shipping UF<sub>6</sub> cylinders containing only heels, with Hunt valves installed.

If you have any further questions, please contact Lance Lessler, of my staff, at (301) 415-8144.

Sincerely,

***/RA/***

Robert C. Pierson, Director  
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety  
and Safeguards  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Docket No. 70-7003

cc: Rick Boyle, DOT  
S. A. Toelle, USEC

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Robert C. Pierson, Director  
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Distribution:

FCSS r/f	RHannah, RII	RVirgilio, OSP	DMartin, FCFB	FGee, SFPO
RTrojanowski, RII	JHenson, RII	EBaker, OIP	DStout, FCFB	
DHartland, RII	LTrocine, OE	MRaddatz, FCFB	RLewis, SFPO	

**ML041040537**

\*See previous concurrence

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