

December 23, 2004

Dr. Mario V. Bonaca, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS
LETTER REGARDING LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS REVIEW OF THE AP1000
DESIGN

Dear Dr. Bonaca:

This letter responds to your letter dated November 18, 2004, regarding lessons learned from the Committee's review of the Westinghouse Electric Company application for certification of the AP1000 plant design. Both the final safety evaluation report and the final design approval for the AP1000 were issued on September 13, 2004. The staff is currently working on the design certification rulemaking and plans to issue a final rule before December 2005.

I appreciate the Committee's comments concerning the level of detail in the safety evaluation report and the continued use of the phenomena identification and ranking table process in design certification reviews. The staff previously provided their plans to address some of the Committee's comments in a letter dated May 18, 2004, and would be pleased to discuss with the ACRS the status as progress is made. With regard to the Committee's comments on control room staffing, the staff has issued Draft NUREG-1791, "Guidance for Assessing Exemption Requests from the Nuclear Power Plant Licensed Operator Staffing Requirements Specified in 10 CFR 50.54(m)," and plans to meet with the ACRS on the draft NUREG in 2005. With regard to the Committee's remaining comment on aerosol removal in containment, the staff plans to consider this issue in conjunction with future design certification reviews and discuss this issue with the ACRS during a future meeting. Thank you for your comments and my staff looks forward to its continued interactions with the Committee during your review of advanced plant designs.

Sincerely,

/RA EWM acting for/

Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
SECY

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Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director
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