

January 6, 2005

Mr. Gordon Bischoff, Manager
Owners Group Program Management Office
Westinghouse Electric Company
P.O. Box 355
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0355

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO THE WESTINGHOUSE OWNERS GROUP LETTER
WITHDRAWING WCAP-15977-P, "RELIABILITY ASSESSMENT OF
CUTLER-HAMMER D26MR802A RELAYS USED AS SSPS SLAVE RELAYS"
(TAC NO. MC0159)

Dear Mr. Bischoff:

By letter dated July 14, 2003, the Westinghouse Owners Group (WOG) submitted Topical Report (TR) WCAP-15977-P, "Reliability Assessment of Cutler-Hammer D26MR802A Relays Used as SSPS [Solid-State Protection System] Slave Relays" to the staff for review. Subsequently, on September 22, 2004, a telephone conference was held between the WOG and the NRC staff to discuss review of the TR. In that telephone conference, the NRC staff informed the WOG staff that the TR is not acceptable to the NRC staff as it does not have enough operating data to demonstrate reliability of the Cutler-Hammer relay, and to justify the requested Surveillance test interval of one refueling outage. Also some of the failures cited in the TR were dismissed without providing any basis for the determination. However, the staff suggested that the licensees may use their commercial dedication process to justify the similarity (form, fit and function) between the AR relay and Cutler-Hammer relay and then can apply the same surveillance test interval as was used for AR relays. Based on this telephone conference, the WOG decided to withdraw the TR from the NRC review.

However, the WOG's November 18, 2004, withdrawal letter suggested that they were withdrawing the TR based on an NRC agreement that WCAP-15977-P can be utilized as the technical basis in a 10 CFR 50.59 evaluation for replacing the AR relay with the Cutler-Hammer relay. The NRC staff does not agree with this statement as the NRC staff has not reviewed or approved the TR or otherwise passed any judgement on utilizing the TR as the technical basis for using the Cutler-Hammer relay to replace AR relays.

Therefore, on December 2, 2004, the NRC staff had a telephone conference with the WOG to discuss the withdrawal letter. During the conference call, the NRC staff informed the WOG that the language in the withdrawal letter could be interpreted that WCAP-15977-P is acceptable to the staff for using Cutler-Hammer relay to replace AR relays. The NRC staff again conveyed to WOG that the TR is not acceptable to the NRC staff for the reasons stated above, however, the licensees may use their commercial dedication process to justify replacing AR relays with Cutler-Hammer relay. The NRC staff further conveyed to the WOG that in order for the TR to be acceptable, the NRC staff will need more operational data to justify the reliability of the Cutler-Hammer relay as was done with the Potter & Brumfield MDR relay or for the AR relay. The WOG requested the NRC to put the review on hold until the WOG collects the needed reliability information to revise WCAP-15977-P and resubmit it to the NRC for review.

G. Bischoff

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If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Girija Shukla at 301-415-8439.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Robert A. Gramm, Chief, Section 2
Project Directorate IV
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Project No. 694

cc:
Mr. James A. Gresham, Manager
Regulatory Compliance and Plant Licensing
Westinghouse Electric Company
P.O. Box 355
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