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3/31/05

**From:** "Joseph Malherek" <jmalherek@citizen.org>  
**To:** <nrcprep@nrc.gov>  
**Date:** Wed, Mar 30, 2005 9:18 PM  
**Subject:** Public Citizen comments on NUREG-1800

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached in a PDF you will find Public Citizen's comments on draft NUREG-1800, "Standard Review Plan for Review of License Renewal Applications for Nuclear Power Plants" (SRP-LR) and draft NUREG-1801, "Generic Aging Lessons Learned (GALL) Report."

Please enter these comments into the official record of this proceeding.

Sincerely,  
Joseph P. Malherek

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Joseph P. Malherek

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2/1/05  
70 FR 5254

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NRC  
MAR 31 2005  
WASHINGTON, DC  
20540-0001  
J. Malherek

SISF Report Complete  
Template = ADM-013

E-KIDS = ADM-03  
ADM = J. Dozier (JXD)

**Mail Envelope Properties** (424B5E07.898 : 14 : 47256)

**Subject:** Public Citizen comments on NUREG-1800  
**Creation Date:** Wed, Mar 30, 2005 9:18 PM  
**From:** "Joseph Malherek" <jmalherek@citizen.org>

**Created By:** jmalherek@citizen.org

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**Files**

MESSAGE  
nureg1800comments.pdf  
Mime.822

**Size**

610  
80915  
112636

**Date & Time**

Wednesday, March 30, 2005 9:18 PM

**Options**

**Expiration Date:** None  
**Priority:** Standard  
**Reply Requested:** No  
**Return Notification:** None

**Concealed Subject:**

No

**Security:**

Standard



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March 30, 2005

Chief Rules and Directives Branch  
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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

**Re: Comments on draft NUREG-1800, "Standard Review Plan for Review of License Renewal Applications for Nuclear Power Plants" (SRP-LR) and draft NUREG-1801, "Generic Aging Lessons Learned (GALL) Report"**

To Whom It May Concern:

In developing and executing an SRP-LR, it is essential that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and its staff maintain institutional independence while conducting a trenchant review of the peculiar qualities of each nuclear power plant under consideration for license renewal.

Regarding institutional independence, it is a matter of concern for Public Citizen that (1) the safety review conducted for reactor license renewals is "based primarily on the information provided by the applicant," and (2) a great portion of the SRP-LR appears to have been directly adopted from guidelines developed by the nuclear industry's trade group, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) (Draft NUREG-1800, pg. 1). In order to maintain a distinct separation between federal regulators and industry while ensuring proper government oversight of nuclear plant operators, it is imperative that the NRC seek a greater degree of independence in conducting reviews of license renewal applications. Unless the NRC has the capacity to conduct its own safety reviews and develop its own guidelines for considering license applications, citizens cannot be assured that the NRC is serving the interest of the public and not that of industry.

Secondly, Public Citizen is concerned about the degree to which NRC staff might conduct reviews of license renewal applications on a *generic* rather than plant-specific basis, as indicated in the Draft NUREG-1800. While this method might serve the NRC's stated goal of "efficiency," as articulated in the *Federal Register* notice of these revised guidance documents (70 FR 5254), it may compromise the agency's ability to appreciate the unique character, history, and environment of each nuclear reactor under consideration for license renewal. Although they may have similar designs and components, no two nuclear power plants are identical, and the forces to which they have been subjected throughout their operational lives may vary greatly. Therefore, each license renewal application should be considered independently of any generic determination about a particular type of power plant.

As we enter into a period where a great number of the initial 40-year operating licenses for nuclear power plants will expire, it is crucially important that the NRC's review of license renewal applications prioritizes safety above expediency. A quick and easy re-licensing process may satisfy the desire of plant operators to continue profiting from their facilities, but it may not serve the public's interest in knowing that these plants have been subject to rigorous government oversight to ensure a sufficient degree of safety.

The recent history of license renewals demonstrates a fairly quick and easy turnover without a single rejection. In future reviews of license applications, a desire to continue this trend should not supersede a dedication to fastidious and independent review in each particular case.

Please enter these comments into the official record of this proceeding.

Sincerely,



Joseph P. Malherek  
Policy Analyst, Public Citizen