

September 29, 2005

MEMORANDUM TO: Daniel S. Collins, Acting Chief, Section 2  
Project Directorate IV  
Division of Licensing Project Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
/RA/  
FROM: Girija Shukla, Project Manager, Section 2  
Project Directorate IV  
Division of Licensing Project Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF DROP-IN VISIT BY NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE ON  
SEPTEMBER 7, 2005, TO DISCUSS NRC'S TOPICAL REPORT (TR)  
REVIEW PROCESS

On September 7, 2005, at the request of the NRC staff, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) TR Team had a drop-in visit with the NRC staff to discuss NRC's TR review process and the change in the NRC policy on accepting license amendment requests (LARs) that reference TRs still under NRC review.

The drop-in visit began with a discussion of the overall TR review process and recent improvements made to the process. Items discussed were: effective pre-submittal meetings, expanded acceptance review, custom review schedules agreed upon by NRC staff and applicant, fee waiver determination process streamlined, incorporation of TRs into the NRR Centralized Work Planning Process, improvements in NRC staff and Vendor/Owners Group interface, issuance of draft SE for comment, and quantity and timeliness metrics for TRs.

The NRC staff discussed the reasons for the change in the NRC policy for generally not accepting LARs referencing TRs still under NRC review. The NRC staff explained that: submitting a LAR whose sole justification is an unapproved TR doesn't help either the LAR or the TR review and benefits no one; approval of a TR might be delayed or denied for technical or other reasons, thus impacting the need date for the LAR; there is a disparity in LAR and TR work prioritization and submitting an LAR does not improve the referenced TR priority; duplication of NRC staff efforts results in inefficient use of NRC staff and industry resources; if "pilot" demonstration of TR methodology is necessary, include data in TR; if plant-specific approval is truly needed on a short schedule, submit a stand-alone LAR; there might be occasional instances where a separate pilot LAR is helpful to the TR review, which should be determined and agreed to at a pre-submittal meeting.

The NEI TR Team appreciated the NRC staff overview of the TR review process and the recent improvements made. The NEI TR Team further discussed its understanding of the TR review process and stated that the process is sound but is not being implemented efficiently and effectively. The NEI TR Team commented that: the metrics for TRs and LARs should be made the same to give TRs the same priority as LARs; there is a need to address lack of efficient use of NRC resources to review TRs; the consolidated line item improvement process (CLIP) should also be applied to TRs; the NRC staff should develop criteria for when a pilot plant LAR is appropriate; pilot plant LARs should be allowed to have a review time of more than the current LAR 1- and 2-year metrics.

The NRC staff agreed to consider NEI comments. It was also agreed to hold these meetings semi-annually. At the conclusion of the drop-in visit, the NRC staff expressed its appreciation to NEI for the drop-in visit. An attendance list is provided in the attachment. The NRC and NEI handouts used during the meeting are available in the Agencywide Documents Access and Management System under accession number ML052660176.

Project No. 689

Attachment: Attendance List

cc w/att: See next page

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cc w/att: See next page

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**NRC-001**

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**DROP-IN VISIT ATTENDEES**  
**DROP-IN VISIT BY THE NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE (NEI) TO**  
**DISCUSS THE NRC TOPICAL REPORT REVIEW PROCESS**

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2005**

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Rob Sisk	Westinghouse
Jerry Holm	Framatome ANP
Ken Vavrek	WOG (Westinghouse)
Mike Schoppman	NEI

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