

October 31, 2005

Dr. Graham B. Wallis, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS
LETTER ON UPDATES TO LICENSE RENEWAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

Dear Dr. Wallis:

In your letter to Chairman Diaz dated September 22, 2005, you summarized the results of the review by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) of the revised license renewal guidance documents. On the basis of its review, the Committee concluded that "the changes to the guidance documents are comprehensive and appropriate. They will facilitate the demonstration of the consistency of applications with the Generic Aging Lessons Learned (GALL) Report and staff reviews, and will reduce the number of requests for additional information that are required to support the staff's review." The Committee recommended that the draft final revisions to the generic license renewal guidance documents should be approved for issuance and that the staff should continue to evaluate the need for revisions to the guidance documents in order to maintain them current. The staff's response to your recommendations is discussed below.

On September 30, 2005, we issued the revised NUREG-1800, "Standard Review Plan for Review of License Renewal Applications for Nuclear Power Plants," NUREG-1801, "Generic Aging Lessons Learned (GALL) Report," and Regulatory Guide 1.188, "Standard Format and Content for Applications to Renew Nuclear Power Plant Operating Licenses." These documents provide guidance on preparing and reviewing license renewal applications.

We will continue to evaluate the need for revisions to the license renewal guidance documents and update them as needed. The Interim Staff Guidance (ISG) process is a provisional mechanism for updating the current license renewal guidance documents. As Dr. Bonaca stated in the letter to Chairman Diaz dated June 24, 2003, "The ISG process is a major step toward improving the efficiency of the review process and reducing the number of requests for additional information (RAIs). The staff should continue to provide guidance on emerging license renewal issues through the ISG process and incorporate such guidance into the future revisions of the generic license renewal guidance documents." In accordance with ACRS recommendations, we will continue to use this ISG process to keep the documents current until the next revision.

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The staff appreciates the substantial resources that ACRS devotes to supporting the license renewal program. The Committee's timely review helped the staff meet the review schedule. We agree with the Committee's concluding statement that "the contributions of the staff, the industry, and the public to these revisions should be recognized."

Sincerely,

/RA Martin J. Virgilio Acting For/

Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
Commissioner Jaczko
Commissioner Lyons
SECY

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