

January 5, 2006

Mr. David Hinds, Manager, ESBWR
General Electric Company
P.O. Box 780, M/C L60
Wilmington, NC 28402-0780

SUBJECT: ESBWR DESIGN CERTIFICATION REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION PROCESS AND EXPECTATIONS

Dear Mr. Hinds:

By letter dated August 24, 2005, General Electric Company (GE) submitted an application for final design approval and standard design certification of the economic simplified boiling water reactor (ESBWR) standard plant design. By letter dated December 1, 2005, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff informed GE that the application, as revised and supplemented, was sufficiently complete to allow the staff to proceed with its detailed technical review and that requests for additional information (RAIs) would be formulated.

To assure efficient and effective execution of the RAI process, the staff sends RAIs to you by electronic mail, conducts a telecon to assure a common understanding of the meaning and need for the RAI, and establishes a mutually agreed upon date for responding to the RAIs. A letter is then issued documenting the RAIs and the telecon. The NRC staff's December 1, 2005, letter to GE noted that if GE's commitment for RAI responses is longer than the nominal response times assumed, or if GE fails to respond by the agreed upon due date, the schedule for issuance of the safety evaluation report (SER) with open items may be revised.

On November 9, 2005, we discussed with you and your staff several RAIs related to probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) and severe accidents and we established an agreed upon response date of December 30, 2005. These RAIs and the schedule were documented by our letter dated December 8, 2005. We received GE's RAI response letter dated December 29, 2005, which was not complete. Your letter stated that GE will provide a revised schedule to respond to the 15 outstanding RAIs by January 16, 2006. I want to inform you that this delay and any similar delay may affect the completion date for the SER with open items.

I would also like to emphasize the need to promptly hold our discussions on RAIs and to establish a schedule for your response. We appreciate your attention to these matters as they will help us to complete the ESBWR design certification review in a timely and efficient manner.

D. Hinds

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If you have any questions or comments concerning this matter, you may contact Ms. Amy E. Cabbage, the lead ESBWR Project Manager, at (301) 415-2875 or aec@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Laura A. Dudes, Chief
New Reactor Licensing Branch
Division of New Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 52-010

cc: See next page

D. Hinds

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If you have any questions or comments concerning this matter, you may contact Ms. Amy E. Cubbage, the lead ESBWR Project Manager, at (301) 415-2875 or aec@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Laura A. Dudes, Chief
New Reactor Licensing Branch
Division of New Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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ESBWR

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