

April 26, 2006

Mr. Adrian P. Heymer
Senior Director, New Plant Deployment
Nuclear Energy Institute
1776 I Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006-3708

Dear Mr. Heymer:

I am responding to your April 4, 2006, letter which provided industry lessons learned from the Inspections, Tests, Analyses and Acceptance Criteria (ITAAC) Demonstration Project and comments on U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) construction inspection program guidance documents.

Thank you for providing the detailed listing of the lessons learned from the ITAAC Demonstration Project. The number and scope of the items on the lessons learned list clearly reflects the success of the industry and NRC staff in their on-going interactions aimed at developing a common understanding of issues related to the construction inspection program. The NRC staff has identified that many of the items on the list are associated with the activities to be undertaken by a licensee and the NRC to close an ITAAC. During the closeout process, the NRC's construction inspection organization will support the new reactor licensing organization. With that future relationship in mind, the licensing staff has assumed the lead in the NRC's continuing interactions with the industry to define the details of the ITAAC closeout process. The construction inspection team will continue to work closely with both the industry and the new reactor licensing group as that effort moves forward to ensure that ITAAC inspection information will be complete and readily available to support the timely closeout of an ITAAC.

The construction inspection program development team has reviewed and will consider each of the comments you provided on the guidance for NRC inspectors contained in Inspection Manual Chapter 2502 and its related inspection procedures. No immediate changes are planned since some of the issues you have raised about first-of-a-kind engineering activities will likely be discussed during the May 17 through 19, 2006 public workshop being sponsored by the NRC's new reactor licensing staff on Draft Regulatory Guide 1145 on combined license applications for nuclear power plants. Based on the outcomes of that workshop, the inspection program staff will evaluate if the guidance that has been issued to NRC inspectors needs to be modified.

A. Heymer

- 2 -

We are encouraged by the success of our interactions with the industry in this area and look forward to additional progress on construction inspection issues in the future. If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact me at (301) 415-1004; mjc@nrc.gov or Mary Ann Ashley at (301) 415-1073; mab@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Michael J. Case, Director
Division of Inspection and Regional Support
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Project No. 689

A. Heymer

- 2 -

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Michael J. Case, Director
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