

May 25, 2006

Mr. Edward G. Wallace, Senior General Manager-US Programs
Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (Pty) Ltd.
P.O. Box 9396
Centurion 0046
Republic of South Africa

SUBJECT: SUBMITTAL OF PBMR PRE-APPLICATION PAPERS

Dear Mr. Wallace:

In your letter, dated May 1, 2006 (ADAMS¹ Accession #ML061210537), you addressed your company's revised plans for submitting the white papers associated with the Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PBMR) pre-application review. These submittal plans represent a change to those that you first conveyed to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in your letter dated December 8, 2005 (ML053420601).

In addition to the three white papers that the NRC staff had planned to review, as discussed in our letter dated April 24, 2006 (ML060950275), we will consider reviewing the white paper on "Probabilistic Risk Assessment (PRA) Approach," as well as the paper on your proposed format and content for the design certification application (DCA) for PBMR, to the extent that such reviews enable the staff to better understand the PBMR safety approach and planned format and content for the DCA. We consider that gaining an understanding of the DCA approach is fundamental to accomplishing our mutual goals for the pre-application activity.

As you are aware, certification of a PBMR design presents unique challenges in developing and applying regulatory requirements in a manner that is both risk-informed and performance-based. Although our PBMR pre-application review may take place concurrent with the NRC's ongoing development of a regulatory framework that can be applied to non-light water cooled reactors (non-LWRs), the two activities are not directly related. Despite the assertion in your letter that the NRC appears to utilize the PBMR pre-application review for developing our non-LWR regulatory framework, our objective for the PBMR pre-application review has been — and will continue to be — focused on resolving PBMR-specific technical, regulatory, and policy issues pertinent to design certification. Thus, the feedback from our pre-application review should enable you to prepare a high-quality, non-LWR DCA, consistent with 10 CFR Part 52.

¹ Documents cited in this letter are publicly available through the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>, under the specified accession numbers.

E. Wallace

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We are looking forward to your revised scope and schedule for the white papers. Please contact N. Prasad Kadambi of my staff at 301-415-5896, if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Christiana Lui, Deputy Director */RA/*
New Reactors and Computational Analysis
Division of Risk Assessment and Special Projects
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

Project No. 732

cc: See next page

E. Wallace

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Letter to Edward G. Wallace from C. Lui dated: _____

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