June 8, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: Brian E. Thomas, Branch Chief
Research and Test Reactors Branch
Division of Policy and Rulemaking
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

FROM: Alexander Adams, Jr., Senior Project Manager **/RA/**
Research and Test Reactors Branch
Division of Policy and Rulemaking
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF MAY 11, 2006, CATEGORY 1 MEETING WITH UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS OF THE PERMIAN BASIN TO DISCUSS PLANS TO LICENSE THE HIGH TEMPERATURE TEACHING AND TEST REACTOR (TAC NO. MD1722)

On May 11, 2006, a public meeting was held between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and representatives of the University of Texas of the Permian Basin (UTPB) at NRC Headquarters, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss future plans of the UTPB to license the High Temperature Teaching and Test Reactor (HT3R).

This was the first meeting between the NRC staff and the UTPB. Also at the meeting were representatives of General Atomics (GA), a partner of the UTPB that is developing the technical design of the reactor. The UTPB presented information on the project objectives. The UTPB, part of the University of Texas system, plans to develop teaching and research capabilities to address current energy and environmental issues. This includes establishing an engineering and physics teaching program and constructing the HT3R to develop high-temperature gas reactor (HTGR) technology. A presentation on programmatic information discussed the development of the technical, academic and business components of the project.

The UTPB is in the pre-conceptual design stage. The goal is to develop a reference design, along with engineering, licensing and construction costs and a schedule. Current plans are to have the pre-conceptual design complete by December 2006. The current schedule shows an application being submitted to NRC in 2009, construction start in 2010, and operation at the end of 2012.

The planned research facilities were discussed which include radiation, high temperature materials and process development, and high temperature energy transfer laboratories. Reactor experimental facilities include beam tubes, pneumatic conveyors (rabbit system) and in-core irradiation capability. GA staff gave a presentation on the technical aspects of the design. Current plans call for the HT3R to be a 25 MW(t) test reactor using GA HTGR key design characteristics.

The staff briefly discussed the various licensing options (such as research vs test reactor) and processes. The UTPB would be the licensee. The University of Texas currently operates a research reactor in Austin. UTPB staff indicated that they would like to hold future meetings as they continue with their pre-conceptual development to better understand the NRC licensing process and technical requirements.

Members of the public were in attendance. The President of the Andrews Economic Development Corporation expressed strong local support for the project. Public Meeting Feedback forms were not received.

A list of meeting attendees is enclosed. The slides presented at the meeting can be found under ADAMS Accession Number ML061350105. A document about regional community support for the HT3R in West Texas can be found under ADAMS Accession Number ML061320395.

Please direct any inquires to Alexander Adams at 301-415-1127, or AXA@NRC.GOV.

Project No. P747

Enclosure: List of Attendees

cc w/enc: See next page

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MEETING BETWEEN THE NRC STAFF AND
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PERMIAN BASIN

May 11, 2006

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATION	E-MAIL
Alexander Adams	PM	NRC	axa@nrc.gov
Daniel Hughes	PM	NRC	deh3@nrc.gov
James F. Wright	PM	UTPB/HT3R	wright_j@utpb.edu
Arkal Shenoy		GA	shenoy@gat.com
Malcolm Labar		GA	labarm@gat.com
William Schuster		NRC	wcs1@nrc.gov
Bill Macon		NRC	wam1@nrc.gov
Jim Danna		NRC	jgd@nrc.gov
Ujagar Bhachu		NRC/NMSS	ubhachu@nrc.gov
Farshid Shahrokh		Areva-NP	f.shahrokhi@areva.com
David Baldwin		GA	davidbaldwin@gat.com
Marvin Mendonia		NRC	mmm@nrc.gov
Jenny Redmond		Andrews, TX	remondfamily1@cos.net
Kirk Edwards		Odessa, TX	maclondon@cableone.net
John Bolin		General Atomics	john.bolin@gat.com
Donald E. Carlson		NRC/RES	dec1@nrc.gov
Brian Thomas		NRC/NRR	bet@nrc.gov
Kent B. Welter		NRC/RES	kbw@nrc.gov
N P Kadambt		RES	npk@nrc.gov
William M. Christian	Asst. Vice Chancellor	U T System	wchristian@utsystem.edu
Kevin Witt		NRC/NRR	kmw@nrc.gov

Enclosure 1