

August 1, 2006

Mr. Giovanni Saponaro
Agenzia per la Protezione dell'Ambiente e per i Servizi Tecnici
Via Vitaliano Brancati, 48
00144 Roma
ITALY

Dear Mr. Saponaro:

This letter is to inform you that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (U.S. NRC) has decided to discontinue, as of September 30, 2006, the activities associated with the International Cooperative Probabilistic Risk Assessment (COOPRA) Research Program. This includes all activities associated with the COOPRA Steering Committee, Working Groups, and Web site.

Staff representatives of the U.S. NRC discussed the future of the COOPRA Research Program with the COOPRA partners at the last Steering Committee meeting on October 27–28, 2005. Our principal concern with the program was that differences between activities carried out by COOPRA and the Working Group on Risk Assessment (WGRisk) of the Committee on the Safety of Nuclear Installations (CSNI) have narrowed, resulting in overlapping responsibilities and duplication of effort. In recent years, the benefits of the COOPRA Research Program have diminished as a result of declining COOPRA membership and limited resources available from partner organizations to support the program's activities. Consequently, the U.S. NRC evaluated options for the future of COOPRA, including discontinuing the program.

COOPRA has the following three Working Groups:

- Fire-Induced Damage to Electrical Cables and Circuits (FIDECC)
- Risk-Informed Decision-Making (RIDeM)
- Low-Power and Shutdown (LPSD)

The FIDECC Working Group has not been active lately and currently has no chairperson. The RIDeM Working Group holds annual meetings, at which participants exchange information on research results. The LPSD Working Group has three ongoing activities under COOPRA, and the U.S. NRC has been interacting with WGRisk to have those activities transferred to that organization.

Following the last Steering Committee meeting, the U.S. NRC requested the partners' input and recommendations on the future of COOPRA. After assessing the input, we have decided to discontinue the COOPRA program. Any future cooperative work in the area of probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) will be accomplished through bilateral agreements with our international partner organizations.

Over the years, the COOPRA Research Program has achieved its purpose and established a very effective organization serving participants in PRA international cooperation. I would like to thank the Agenzia per la Protezione dell'Ambiente for the participation and contributions it has provided to COOPRA. It has been a pleasure working with you and your organization.

If you have any questions or comments on this matter, please contact Dr. Asimios Malliakos of my staff at (301) 415-6458 or via email to ACM1@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/ Jose Ibarra for/

John D. Monninger, Deputy Director
Division of Risk Assessment and Special Projects
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

G. Saponaro

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