October 17, 2006

Mr. Alex Marion
Executive Director for Nuclear Operation and Engineering
Nuclear Energy Institute
1776 I Street, NW., Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006-3708

Dear Mr. Marion:

I am writing to offer the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) an opportunity to coordinate the participation of industry experts in the peer review of NRC's draft report entitled "Reliability Modeling of Digital Instrumentation and Control Systems for Nuclear Reactor Probabilistic Risk Assessments." This report describes one of the methods the NRC staff is investigating as an acceptable method for performing digital system reliability modeling.

As discussed at the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) Digital Instrumentation and Control Systems Subcommittee meeting held on June 27, 2006, NRC is conducting an extensive internal and external peer review of this report. The report will undergo an internal peer review by the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research staff, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation staff, and the ACRS. The external peer review of this report will include experts from industry, academia, and the Department of Energy's national laboratories, as well as experts in other safety critical industries.

During your ACRS subcommittee presentation you requested that NEI be given an opportunity to coordinate the participation of industry experts in the peer review of the report. Please provide the name(s) and contact information for one or two nuclear utility peer reviewers to Steven Arndt (at 301-415-6502 or saa@nrc.gov) of my staff. We will provide the draft document to the reviewers by October 13, 2006, and request that reviewers provide their comments in approximately 4 weeks.

At the June meeting, you also indicated NEI's interest in digital system reliability modeling and suggested integrating the industry's and NRC's research and development efforts in this area. Since that time, we understand that NEI has established a Digital Instrumentation and Control and Human Factors Working Group and a Digital Probabilistic Risk Assessment Task Force under the working group. These groups will meet with the NRC staff to discuss this area of research at a public meeting on October 19, 2006. For your information William Kemper (at 301-415-7585 or wek@nrc.gov) is our point of contact.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Mark A. Cunningham, Director
Division of Fuel, Engineering and
Radiological Research
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

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Mark A. Cunningham, Director
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