

November 17, 2006

Mr. Kenneth R. Balkey, PE
Vice President
ASME Nuclear Codes and Standards
Three Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016-5990

Dear Mr. Balkey:

I am responding on behalf of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your letter of September 25, 2006, in which you request that the NRC extend the comment period of Draft Regulatory Guide 1144 (DG-1144), "Guidelines for Evaluating Fatigue Analyses Incorporating the Life Reduction of Metal Components Due to the Effects of the Light-Water Reactor Environment for New Reactors." The NRC has elected to deny your request and will not accept further comment on DG-1144. The comments you provided on September 25, 2006 will be considered.

DG-1144 and the associated draft technical basis report, NUREG/CR-6909, "Effect of LWR Coolant Environments on the Fatigue Life of Reactor Materials," were published for public comment on July 24, 2006. The public comment period ended on September 25, 2006. We believe that the two-month period afforded the public ample opportunity to comment on the subject reports. In addition, the NRC is on an accelerated schedule for finalizing several high priority regulatory guides in order to support new reactor licensing.

The NRC issues Regulatory Guides to describe to the public methods that the staff considers acceptable for use in implementing specific parts of the agency's regulations, to explain techniques that the staff uses in evaluating specific problems or postulated accidents, and to provide guidance to applicants. The NRC staff will consider any new information developed by ASME in future revisions to the final Regulatory Guide.

If you have further questions, please contact me or Mr. Hipolito J. Gonzalez of my staff. Mr. Gonzalez is the Project Manager assigned to the development of DG-1144 and NUREG/CR-6909. He can be reached at (301) 415-0068, or via email at hjg@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/ Jennifer Uhle for

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

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