

PR 50 Draft Policy Statement
(73FR26349)

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JOHN D. RUNKLE
ATTORNEY AT LAW
POST OFFICE BOX 3793
CHAPEL HILL, N.C. 27515-3793

July 7, 2008 (2:35pm)

OFFICE OF SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

919-942-0600 (o&f)
jrunkle@pricecreek.com

VIA MAIL & EMAIL

July 4, 2008

Secretary
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001
ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

Re: Regulation of Advanced Nuclear Power Plants; Draft Statement of Policy
73 FR 26349 NRC-2008-0237

Secretary:

My client, the North Carolina Waste Awareness and Reduction Network, Inc. ("NC WARN"), has been involved in safety-related issues at a number of nuclear power plants in North and South Carolina. We expect to petition to intervene in at least one of the proposed combined operating license applications ("COLAs") now before the Commission.

We agree with the position espoused in the Federal Register notice that new nuclear reactors should identify in their design stage "potential mitigative measures and/or design features that provide a more robust and effective security posture." Of course, it would not be prudent to ignore the possible threats of terrorist attacks and aviation attacks at any reactor.

However, this proposed policy change leads us to conclude that existing reactors and the reactors presently being proposed, such as the AP1000 and ESBWR designs, DO NOT ADDRESS the same security threats and safety concerns in any meaningful way. It seems an untenable position by the Commission to recognize that "advance reactors" need to be made safer, more robust and effective, yet ignore the clear message it is sending the public on the lack of safety at the current reactors and proposed reactors. Similar to the advanced reactors, the current reactors and proposed reactors need to have

- reliable and less complex shutdown systems
- more effective instrumentation; simplified safety systems

Template = SECY-067

SECY-02

- designs that minimize the potential for severe accidents and their consequences
- reliable equipment
- maintainable equipment
- designs that reduce radiation exposure to the plant personnel
- multiple barriers against radiation release
- proven design features
- secure plants
- containment that can withstand aircraft impacts
- spent fuel pools that can withstand aircraft impacts.

The Commission cannot adequately protect public health and safety by looking at the needed safety designs and security measures for advanced reactors in isolation from the existing and proposed reactors. In our opinion, the Commission needs to guarantee that all current reactors meet these minimal safety requirements as a top priority, and then ensure that the designs for the proposed reactors should meet these requirements prior to the issuance of any new reactor licenses.

In setting its policy, the Commission should pay attention to the cogent argument recently made before you by Diane Curran on behalf of the San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace. The inescapable conclusion is that none of the existing reactors are truly safe and secure.

“Advanced reactors” can wait until our present deficiencies are fixed and the designs for the proposed new reactors are made safe and secure. Delaying the resolution of these issues increases the risk of accidents and security breaches.

Please notify me of any action you take on this matter.

Sincerely,

John D. Runkle
for NC WARN

Rulemaking Comments

From: John Runkle [jrunkle@pricecreek.com]
Sent: Monday, July 07, 2008 11:14 AM
To: Rulemaking Comments
Subject: NRC-2008-0237
Attachments: comments on advanced reactors.pdf

VIA MAIL & EMAIL

Attached are the comments of NC WARN on the Advanced Reactor Design Policy.

John D. Runkle
Attorney at Law
P.O. Box 3793
Chapel Hill, NC 27515
919-942-0600 (o&f)
jrunkle@pricecreek.com

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