

December 05, 2008

MEMORANDUM TO: Michael R. Johnson, Director
Office of New Reactors

FROM: Brian W. Sheron, Director */RA/*
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO USER NEED REQUEST FOR SUPPORT TO
DEVELOP A TECHNICAL BASIS FOR REVISING AND
APPLYING REGULATORY GUIDE 1.59, "DESIGN BASIS
FLOODS FOR NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS" (NRO-2008-004)

This memorandum responds to the subject August 8, 2008, user need request from Scott Flanders, Director, Division of Site and Environmental Reviews, Office of Nuclear Reactors (NRO). Three staff members of the Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES)—John Randall, Annie Kammerer, and Thomas Nicholson—have been working with NRO staff on flood-related issues through the Technical Advisory Group on Floods.

RES's Division of Risk Analysis will be the point of contact for the requested research. Its Environmental Transport Branch (ETB) has initiated three projects on research to support the revision of Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.59. In response to an earlier Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) user need, NRR-2006-011, the Structural, Geotechnical, and Seismic Engineering Branch in RES's Division of Engineering previously initiated three projects on tsunami, one of the flood mechanisms listed in User Need NRO-2008-004. Enclosure 1 to this memorandum describes how ETB plans to respond to Parts III (Deliverables) and IV (Schedule) of the user need request. Enclosure 2 provides a brief status report on the tsunami research. RES will incorporate all of this work in the final revision of RG 1.59 and will continue to work closely with the NRO technical staff and the Technical Advisory Group as this work proceeds.

As indicated in Enclosure 1, we plan to meet the schedules specified in the user need request. We also note, however, that the schedule for issuing a revised RG 1.59 is accelerated with regard to the normal regulatory-guide development process. If any complications arise during the preparation or review of the draft regulatory guide, it is likely that the proposed schedule will be delayed. My staff has discussed these implications for the schedule with their NRO counterparts and they are aware of the challenges they represent. In addition, this response has already been delayed to reflect schedule changes forced by the reduced availability of one of the projects' principal investigators while he conducts case work for NRO. The NRO staff has been informed of these schedule changes and is aware of their impact on the schedule. We will keep you informed of any additional schedule changes if further complications arise.

Enclosures:
As stated

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301-415-6192

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