

July 17, 2009

Dr. Mario V. Bonaca, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE SAFETY ASPECTS OF THE LICENSE RENEWAL
APPLICATION FOR THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS TEST
REACTOR

Dear Dr. Bonaca:

The staff of the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission appreciates the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) review of the safety evaluation report on the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) application for renewal of the National Bureau of Standards Reactor (NBSR) operating license. Your letter dated June 16, 2009, stated that the ACRS had the benefit of discussions with the staff during several meetings. Those discussions led to a substantial increase in the overall technical quality of the safety evaluation report, and the staff thanks the ACRS for its thorough and insightful comments. You also stated that NIST committed to reanalyze the seismic design of an unreinforced shield wall that could potentially impact safety-related equipment. As discussed during the ACRS full committee meeting on June 3, 2009, NIST performed the new analysis and found that the design of the wall is adequate to withstand postulated seismic loading. The staff expects to receive NIST's final report shortly, and the ACRS found this acceptable to close the issue.

In your letter, you agreed with the staff's conclusion that the NBSR can be operated for the period of the renewed license without undue risk to the health and safety of the public, NIST personnel, or the environment. Your letter recommended approval of the NIST application for renewal of the NBSR operating license. The staff completed approval of the application and issued a renewed license on July 2, 2009. Again, the staff wishes to thank the ACRS for its review of the staff's safety evaluation report.

Sincerely,

/RA/

R. W. Borchardt
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Jaczko
Commissioner Klein
Commissioner Svinicki
SECY

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