



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

MAR 2 1979

DOCKET FILE

Docket Nos. 50-438 and 50-439

Mr. N. B. Hughes
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Gentlemen:

This letter is being sent to all licensees authorized to operate or construct a pressurized water power reactor and to all applicants for a license to operate or construct a pressurized water power reactor.

Operating problems have occurred in Pressurized Water Reactor (PWR) steam generators. The enclosed report, "Summary of Operating Experience with Recirculating Steam Generators," NUREG 0523, focuses on the problems associated with steam generators of the recirculation type, i.e., those manufactured by Combustion Engineering and Westinghouse. The report discusses the NRC staff's evaluation of these problems and the programs for resolving these problems.

The NRC has recently identified steam generator degradation as an Unresolved Safety Issue deserving the highest priority for resolution. However, for the reasons identified in the report, the NRC staff has concluded that continued operation of existing plants and licensing of new plants with recirculation type steam generators, pending completion of our review, does not constitute an undue risk to the health and safety of the public and therefore may continue.


It should be noted that a number of research efforts are currently under way which will improve our knowledge of steam generator degradation mechanisms. The information presented in the report represents our current understanding of each issue. Comments on this report and information

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related to steam generator degradation mechanisms are encouraged and should be forwarded to Dr. Boen-Dar Liaw, Engineering Branch, Division of Operating Reactors, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555.


D. G. Eisenhut, Deputy Director
Division of Operating Reactors

Enclosure:
Summary of Operating Experience
with Recirculating Steam
Generators, January 1979,
NUREG 0523

Mr. N. B. Hughes

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