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June 5, 2012

Mr. David Skeen
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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Subject: NRC Endorsement of NEI 12-07, *Guidelines for Performing Verification Walkdowns of Plant Flood Protection Features*

Reference: NRC (D. Skeen) Letter to NEI (A. Heymer), dated May 31, 2012, Endorsement of Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) 12-07, *Guidelines for Performing Verification Walkdowns of Plant Flood Protection Features*

Project Code: 689

Dear Mr. Skeen:

NEI 12-07, *Guidelines for Performing Verification Walkdowns of Plant Flood Protection Features*, was developed in response to the NRC March 12, 2012 10 CFR 50.54(f) letter requesting additional information on flooding hazards and plant flood protection features. The reference endorsed NEI 12-07, noting two necessary changes to the guidance:

1. Add extreme air temperature to the list of examples of adverse weather conditions that could reasonably be expected to simultaneously occur in the following areas:
 - Page 6, Section 3.10, Last Bullet
 - Page 18, Section 5.7, First Paragraph
 - Page 18, Section 5.7, First Bullet
2. Include a citation reference to NUREG-1852, "Demonstrating the Feasibility and Reliability of Operator Manual Actions in Response to Fire," as an additional information source that licensees may consider when evaluating operator manual actions.

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In recent public meetings on NEI 12-07, the NRC staff informed the industry that a temporary instruction is being developed that will reference NUREG 1852. NEI does not believe that there would be benefit in adding a reference to NUREG 1852 in NEI 12-07 or in a NRC temporary instruction on implementing NEI 12-07.

The intent and emphasis of NUREG 1852 is different from the intent and emphasis of NEI 12-07. NEI 12-07 is written to assess the activities necessary to prepare for a flooding event, not the plant operational activities that may be required as a result of the flood. NUREG-1852 addresses manual operator actions required to safely shutdown a plant during a fire. It was not written to apply to firefighting actions (see NUREG 1852, pages 3-6).

The guidance in the NUREG is not clear and is the subject of varying interpretations that have evolved over time. As a result, the NUREG is a topic of ongoing discussion, especially in the area of margins and defense-in-depth. Including an informational reference to NUREG 1852 without a thorough review and discussion of its implications for flooding walkdowns raises the potential for confusion, misinterpretation and needless and prolonged regulatory interaction during the implementation of a high-profile project that has stringent schedules with near-zero margins.

NEI 12-07 already includes guidance on assessing the capability of implementing manual flood protection actions. If additional guidance on assessing manual operator action is deemed necessary, then additional time should be allowed in the schedule to develop specific language for inclusion in NEI 12-07 and subsequent NRC review. Including NUREG 1852 in NEI 12-07 or in a NRC temporary instruction would be counter to the industry's Fukushima response principles for implementing Tier 1 Fukushima lessons learned in an efficient, effective and expeditious manner.

We urge the NRC to reconsider the need to include a reference to NUREG 1852 in NEI 12-07 and in a NRC temporary instruction on NEI 12-07.

The industry remains committed to implementing the Tier 1 actions in an expedited manner. Please contact me to discuss the NUREG 1852 issue to ensure a rapid resolution.

Sincerely,



Adrian Heymer

c: Mr. Nilesh C. Chokshi, NRO/DSEA, NRC