

October 26, 2012

Dr. J. Sam Armijo, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS
LETTER DATED SEPTEMBER 11, 2012, ON TECHNICAL INFORMATION
NEEDS AFFECTING POTENTIAL REGULATION OF EXTENDED STORAGE
AND TRANSPORTATION OF SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL

Dear Dr. Armijo:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter to the Honorable Allison M. Macfarlane dated September 11, 2012, regarding conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) on the technical information needs affecting potential regulation of extended storage and transportation of spent nuclear fuel. The NRC staff agrees with the conclusions and recommendations in your letter. Responses to the ACRS recommendations are provided below:

ACRS Recommendation

Aging management programs (AMPs) for dry cask storage systems (DCSSs) should address the potential for stress corrosion cracking (SCC) in stainless steel canisters exposed to marine environments.

NRC Response

The NRC staff agrees that AMPs for DCSSs should address the potential for SCC in austenitic stainless steel canisters exposed to marine environments. 10 CFR 72.42(a)(2) and 72.240(c)(3), for specific licensees and Certificate of Compliance (CoC) holders, respectively, require that license and certificate renewal applications include a description of the AMP for management of issues associated with aging that could adversely affect structures, systems, and components (SSCs) important to safety. NUREG-1927, "Standard Review Plan for Renewal of Spent Fuel Storage Systems Licenses and Certificates of Compliance," Section 3.4, gives guidance to NRC review staff to verify that renewal applications include the identification of materials, environments, potential aging effects, and appropriate aging management activities for each in-scope SSC. NRC staff has been engaging industry on the topic of potential SCC in stainless steel canisters exposed to marine environments and is currently developing an Information Notice to formally communicate this concern to applicants, licensees, and CoC holders.

ACRS Recommendation

The report, "Identification and Prioritization of the Technical Information Needs Affecting Potential Regulation of Extended Storage and Transportation of Spent Nuclear Fuel," should be finalized after public comments have been considered.

NRC Response

The staff thanks the Committee for its comments on the referenced report. Staff is working to address public comments and finalize the report for publication. The final report will reflect comments from the public and the Committee.

The NRC staff appreciates the comments and recommendations provided by the ACRS. We look forward to working with the Committee as the staff evaluates the technical information needs affecting regulation of extended storage and transportation of spent nuclear fuel.

Sincerely,

/RA/

R. W. Borchardt
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Macfarlane
Commissioner Svinicki
Commissioner Apostolakis
Commissioner Magwood
Commissioner Ostendorff
SECY

ACRS Recommendation

The report, "Identification and Prioritization of the Technical Information Needs Affecting Potential Regulation of Extended Storage and Transportation of Spent Nuclear Fuel," should be finalized after public comments have been considered.

NRC Response

The staff thanks the Committee for its comments on the referenced report. Staff is working to address public comments and finalize the report for publication. The final report will reflect comments from the public and the Committee.

The NRC staff appreciates the comments and recommendations provided by the ACRS. We look forward to working with the Committee as the staff evaluates the technical information needs affecting regulation of extended storage and transportation of spent nuclear fuel.

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