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Determining the Effectiveness, Limitations, and Operator Response for Very Early Warning Fire Detection Systems in Nuclear Facilities

Comment On: NRC-2015-0112-0001

Determining the Effectiveness, Limitations, and Operator Response for Very Early Warning Fire Detection Systems in Nuclear Facilities (DELORES-VEWFIRE); Draft NUREG for Comment

Document: NRC-2015-0112-DRAFT-0005

Comment on FR Doc # 2015-16547

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General Comment

See attached file(s)

Attachments

DELORES-FIRE_DRAFT

SUNSI Review Complete

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Add= *G. J. Taylor (GJT)*

Comment No.	Document Number Section / Paragraph	Comments / Basis for Comments
1.	Figure 2-3	The growth profiles presented all reflect conditions after ignition, and do not indicate the available time during the incipient stage. This should be noted because the times are otherwise somewhat misleading.
2	Section 2.3 Page 2-6 Lines 33-38	<p><i>For instance, flaming fires tend to produce smokes that have a large fraction of sub-micron particles that tend to absorb a greater fraction of incident light than the fraction scattered, while smokes from smoldering fires tend to have a larger fraction of particles micrometer sized or greater, and they tend to scatter more incident light than the fraction absorbed.</i></p> <p>Typical flaming fires produce more particles that are sub-visible < 350 nm and smoldering fires produce more visible particles > 350 nm. The proportion of scattering to absorption is more related to the material rather than the burning method. Drysdale (the cited reference) does reference that agglomerated smoke particles can be greater than 1 µm, but does not appear to comment on the relative reflectance or absorbance or flaming versus smoldering fires.</p>
3	Section 2.4.1 Lines 5-7	<p><i>The earliest indication of a fire occurrence usually involves the heating of materials during the pre-ignition (incipient) stages, which produces submicron particles ranging in size from 5×10⁻⁴ to 1×10⁻³ micrometers.</i></p> <p>1×10⁻³ µm is only 1 nm, incipient stage combustion can produce particles much larger than this. If this is referring only to pyrolysis, these numbers are within range. The definition of incipient combustion includes the smoldering phase, which can produce particles much larger than 0.001 µm</p>
4	Page 3-5 Line 16-19	It appears that the differences in plant response / alarm response are not due to the analysis (IPEEE versus modern fire PRA methodology), but rather due to plant location. The first case is -ex control room and the second case is within the control room.
5	Page 3-5 Line 21-43	The focus of this report appears to be upon VEWFDs response and a comparison / development of a method to credit VEWFDs in fire PRA methodology. The use of "fire PRA case" and "non-fire PRA case" may cause confusion. Suggest rewording these paragraphs to describe the application of the technology "to protect x" versus the analysis application. The plant risk due to fire is the plant risk due to fire. Unless plant practices, site knowledge, or physical plant modifications are made, the actual plant risk will not change. Over the course of developing fire PRA technology we can do a more realistic or detailed approach to more accurately characterize plant risk, but we're not actually changing the actual plant risk without first understanding vulnerabilities, etc. Therefore, it would be best to leave the analysis goals (IPEEE - to search for vulnerabilities versus fire PRA - NFPA 805, etc.) out of the description.

Comment No.	Document Number Section / Paragraph	Comments / Basis for Comments
6	Page 3-8 Line 20	The insights from non-nuclear note that at one point NASA had over 100 ASD systems, but none remain. Is there any insight into why these systems are no longer installed?
7	Page 4-2 Lines 8-11	<p><i>Alert level of 0.2 %/ft obscuration at each port (or sensitive spot detector), and an Alarm level of 1.0 %/ft obscuration, these were the target sensitivities for ASDs and the sensitive spot detector.</i></p> <p>These are the minimum allowable levels to meet the definition of VEWFD system. If set to these levels (at each hole location), then it may be equivalent to high sensitivity spot detectors. For area-wide detection, the added benefit of the active air sample would likely improve ASD performance, but in cabinets with very little forced airflow there should be no difference. The primary benefit of ASD is that you can set them to alert at much more sensitive levels, whereas the 0.2 %/ft is about the limit for most high sensitive spot detectors.</p> <p>The in cabinet tests did evaluate pre-alarm levels for ASD less than 0.2 %/ft. The sensitivity of the ASDs differed for each test. It would be helpful if some discussion could be provided to the effect of sensitivity on ASD performance.</p>
8	Page 4-6 Lines 8-9	<p><i>The first 10 materials were degraded by conduction of heat from a copper block bus bar whose temperature was ramped from ambient to 450 °C or 485 °C.</i></p> <p>The ramp time is critical to establish detection differences between detection technologies. The best method may have been to ramp to a single temperature and determine whether detection could occur or not, and identify the minimum wire temp that could be detected, not to ramp to the highest temperature and compare times to detection. Thus, the reported time may be arbitrarily linked to the heating rate of the block, not any real in-plant scenario. A difference of a few seconds in the tested scenarios may be the difference of several minutes to hours in a real event.</p>
9	Page 4-6 Lines 22-24	<p><i>Early scoping experiments were conducted with fewer than five wires, but it was observed that the best chances for conventional alarm response were realized with the five-wire arrangement.</i></p> <p>This statement indicates that the conventional detectors required more smoke. The conclusions do not state this clearly and this point is not discussed in any subsequent section.</p>
10	Page 4-19	<p>Figure 4-17</p> <p>It appears one ASD was sampling from the 4th hole while the other two were sampling from the 3rd hole, a transport difference of 0.61 m. This may not have a major impact, but could cause a few seconds of difference.</p>

Comment No.	Document Number Section / Paragraph	Comments / Basis for Comments
11	Page 4-45 through 4-48 Figures 4-45 through 4-49	<p>ASD 4 and 5 sample orientations The number and orientation of sampling points is different on the return air grill and for area wide. The issue is that the spacing for the ASD4 between the cabinets is 3.35 m but for ASD5 is 5.08 m, with no samples between the rows. Suggest adding some text to clarify the observed difference.</p>
12	Page 4-49 Line 44-45	<p><i>The average smoke response times for three measurements at the first cabinet were 19.4 ± 2.4, 33.2 ± 6.7 and 13.7 ± 0.2 seconds for ASD1, ASD2 and ASD3, respectively. The measurements at the last cabinet were 20.3 ± 1.8, 32.0 ± 1.7 and 15.3 ± 1.2 seconds for ASD1, ASD2 and ASD3, respectively.</i></p> <p>The transport time for ASD2 at the last cabinet is shorter than for the first cabinet.</p>
13	Page 5-1 Lines 42-44	<p><i>It is important to note that this experimental research was not designed to assess the performance of VEVFD models or types against one another, but rather, was designed to assess the potential VEVFD performance against conventional detectors.</i></p> <p>Different detectors operate using unique principles, and one-to-one comparative analyses conducted by matching the obscuration levels are not always appropriate. In reality, the alarm threshold levels specified for each device installed would be unique.</p>
14	Page 5-3 Figure 5-1	<p>Alarm and pre-alert The report compares the Pre-alert response (0.1%/ft for light scattering ASD) to the alarm response for the spot ionization detector (1.0 %/ft) and concluded that the ion was performing much faster and more reliably. Although ionization may be more sensitive to pyrolyzed material, better detection at an order magnitude less sensitive setting is unusual.</p>
15	Page 5-26 Figures 5-27 and 5-28	<p>The draft concludes that the ASD were faster performing than the ion, but the SS photo was also faster. This is a major reversal from the previous in-cabinet, no airflow tests. This observation should be further discussed.</p>
16	Page 5-32 Figures 5-34 and 5-35	<p>The SS spot at 0.2 %/ft consistently alerted before the light scattering ASD5 at 0.13 %/ft.</p> <p>Since this was a change from the previous test results, this observation should be further discussed. It may be the result of using XLPE and CPPE wire only, which were among the largest smoke particles.</p>
17	Page 5-55 Lines 4-6	<p><i>The results indicated that, as the ventilation rate increased, the effectiveness of any smoke detector technology in detecting the incipient source decreased.</i></p> <p>This was not the case for all conditions, low ventilation rates</p>

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		improved response of light scattering ASD and SS in some cases.																								
18	Page 6-1 Line 10	Ultimately, yes, you sum up all fire scenarios to determine a core damage frequency due to fire. However, the number is just one part of the equation and the development of risk insights is equally or more important than the development of a number.																								
19	Page 6-2	The discussion of previous quantification approaches in the body of the report may cause confusion. Suggest focusing Part II on the probabilistic modeling approach and move information not relevant to the revised method into an appendix.																								
20	Page 6-2 Line 84	<p>You'll have a reduction in NSP of 0.39 if there was 0 minutes until target damage (NSP = 0.613 with in cabinet, or NSP = 1). The difference in NSP versus time to target damage looks a bit like this:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="711 810 1382 1115"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="711 810 829 902">Minutes</th> <th data-bbox="834 810 1057 902">No In Cabinet Detection NSP</th> <th data-bbox="1062 810 1247 902">In Cabinet Detection NSP</th> <th data-bbox="1252 810 1382 902">Diff in NSP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="711 908 829 944">0</td> <td data-bbox="834 908 1057 944">1.000</td> <td data-bbox="1062 908 1247 944">0.613</td> <td data-bbox="1252 908 1382 944">0.387</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="711 951 829 987">5</td> <td data-bbox="834 951 1057 987">0.613</td> <td data-bbox="1062 951 1247 987">0.375</td> <td data-bbox="1252 951 1382 987">0.237</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="711 993 829 1029">10</td> <td data-bbox="834 993 1057 1029">0.375</td> <td data-bbox="1062 993 1247 1029">0.230</td> <td data-bbox="1252 993 1382 1029">0.145</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="711 1036 829 1072">15</td> <td data-bbox="834 1036 1057 1072">0.230</td> <td data-bbox="1062 1036 1247 1072">0.141</td> <td data-bbox="1252 1036 1382 1072">0.089</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="711 1078 829 1115">20</td> <td data-bbox="834 1078 1057 1115">0.141</td> <td data-bbox="1062 1078 1247 1115">0.086</td> <td data-bbox="1252 1078 1382 1115">0.055</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Minutes	No In Cabinet Detection NSP	In Cabinet Detection NSP	Diff in NSP	0	1.000	0.613	0.387	5	0.613	0.375	0.237	10	0.375	0.230	0.145	15	0.230	0.141	0.089	20	0.141	0.086	0.055
Minutes	No In Cabinet Detection NSP	In Cabinet Detection NSP	Diff in NSP																							
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21	Page 6-7 Line 239	In addition to simulation, decisions trees and expert judgment, time to detection can also be determined via empirical equations; see Milke's correlation and Mowrer's correlation.																								
22	Page 6-7 Line 242	Yes, crediting a detection or suppression system is anticipated to reduce the calculated fire risk. Typically, event trees are used to evaluate differing end states (fire causes damage to initiating component, fire causes damage to secondary targets, fire causes damage to room (HGL)) and the credit of any detection or suppression system. Suggest this sentence be reworded.																								
23	Page 6-9	End state of "cabinet damage" may still be overestimated based on a review of fire event experience related to electrical cabinet fires which suggest that even cabinets that have observed flaming tend to stay localized within the cabinet.																								
24	Page 7-1	It is understood that it is difficult to discern the fraction of fires that exhibit incipient detection from fire event data. The event review focused on fires that exhibited an incipient stage of 30 minutes or greater. Unfortunately, this introduces a conservatism that assumes fires with an incipient stage less than 30 minutes can not be suppressed prior to flaming. Some attempt should be made to quantify this time duration / event set.																								

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25	Page 7-2	Were any fires excluded from the review? How were on demand failures during work activities treated?
26	Page 7-4 Lines 22-34	This paragraph discusses events that are in Bin 4 - Main Control Board. This discussion seems out of scope since the focus of this method is on Bin 15.
27	Page 8-1 Lines 11-13	The "cabinet damage" end state seems more consistent with fire severity classification - fires extending beyond the component of origin. Also, it is unclear why suppression activities constitute "cabinet damage".
28	Page 8-4	Is it fair to compare the performance of incipient fire detection systems with conventional detection systems? Roughly 15% of electrical cabinet fires are detected by fixed detection systems. Most of the remaining fires are detected by plant personnel or other control room indications. Therefore, it is likely that the installation of incipient detection systems would increase the number of fires detected by fixed detection systems. There has been numerous industry OE with respect to incipient detection that suggest early component failures are being detected on a more frequent basis.
29	Page 8-5	How were fire events treated if detected and suppressed by fixed suppression systems in this method?
30	Page 8-5	Unsure what the point of Assumption #2 is - there could be an incipient fire that just is not suppressed in time. It doesn't mean that it did not have an incipient stage. For example, in one fairly recent fire event, operators smelled an odor / smoke for days before the event, but a fire still occurred.
31	Page 10-14 Table 10-1	Table 10-1 attempts to justify the 30 minute time window for the fire event review, however it appears from the event timeline that a technician or other plant personnel may be in the location of interest within 7-14 minutes (if not sooner). It is likely that even with a few minutes that an operator would be able to locate and control an early stage fire regardless of the fire progression (nearing the end of the incipient state or entering flaming (but prior to t-squared) conditions). Again, the thirty minute time window appears to be a severe limitation of this method.
32	Part II General	The quantification of incipient detection requires significantly more analysis than conventional fire detection and suppression methods. This may be warranted as these system can detect early fire signature and the human response plays a more pivotal role in a successful end state. Have the authors benchmarked real world operational experience against this method?
33	Section 12	Sections 7-11 describe pieces of the method, but then Section 12 goes right into illustrative examples. It would be helpful to summarize and provide guidance on parameter selection early in Section 12 and then go into the examples.
Editorial Comments		

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E1	Figure 1-1	Earlier in Executive Summary, it is noted that ion spots were faster than 3 of 5 ASD tested. (xviii line 51). There were 5 ASD tested in total, but not all evaluated at the same time; no more than 3 ASD were included in any test series.
E2	Page 2-3	Second sentence in Section 2.1.1, replace "probability of occurrence" with "frequency of occurrence"
E3	Xviii line 15	<i>"evaluated both in-cabinet and areawide detector response is a small room."</i> Change to "in" a small room
E4	Xviii line 27	<i>"ASD sampling ports and spot-type smoke detectors in to"</i> Delete "in"
E5	Page 1-1	EPRI reports 1011989 and 1016735 can be referenced without the technical report, "TR" designator.
E6	Page 3-1	<i>"Installed as risk reduction measures to support risk quantification studies"</i> While each study may have different insights (whether deterministic or probabilistic), fire protection safety studies are performed to identify plant vulnerabilities and generation of insights that can be used to enhance plant safety. It may be misleading to characterize the installation of VEWFDs "as risk reduction measures to support risk quantification studies". It is likely that these systems are installed to prevent or reduce the likelihood of a damaging fire in a critical area of the plant.
E7	Page 3-5 Line 32	Suggest spelling out RTGB, it is not a common acronym.
E8	Page 3-8 Line 47	<i>Fewer nuisance alarms were installed than spot detectors.</i> It appears that this should have read "Fewer nuisance alarms occurred than where spot detectors were installed"
E9	Page 4-3 Line 47	Reference is broken (not found).
E10	Page 4-9 Line 3	A load cell was used to weight the wire samples before and after each test. Change weight to weigh.
E11	Page 54-23 Line 5	<i>heap-filter air cleaner.</i> This may be a typo, should it be HEPA-filter?
E12	Page 4-50 Line 39	<i>ASD2 were 0.069 kPa for the first two sampling ports (closest to the detector), and 0.64 kPa</i> This is a major difference (perhaps a typo); should the second number be 0.064 kPa?
E13	Page 7-6 Line 45	There appears to be a typo in the unreliability number.
E14	Page 10-6 Tables 10-6 through Tables 10-14	There appears to be a typo in the asterisk- EHP should be HEP
E15	Page 11-2 Line 17	The EPRI report number is incorrect. It should be 3002002936.
E16	Page 13-1	<i>largest partial size for the materials tests.</i>

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	Line 32	Is this a typo, possibly referring to "particle" size