

July 14, 1997

Mr. L. Joseph Callan
Executive Director for Operations
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Dear Mr. Callan:

SUBJECT: PROPOSED FINAL REVISIONS TO 10 CFR PART 26, FITNESS-FOR-DUTY PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

During the 443rd meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, July 9-11, 1997, we met with representatives of the NRC staff to discuss the proposed final modifications to the Fitness-For-Duty Program requirements, as well as the staff's resolution of the public comments. We also had the benefit of the documents referenced.

Overall, the proposed final modifications will strengthen the Fitness-For-Duty Program requirements and provide increased clarity and consistency without adding undue burden on the licensees. The proposed modifications will align the Fitness-For-Duty Program with the recommendations of the Department of Health and Human Services and reduce the possibility of subversion of test results. Therefore, we recommend issuance of the proposed final revisions to 10 CFR Part 26.

We encourage the staff to continue its work on exploring the benefits of Fitness-For-Duty performance indicators in creating a more effective and efficient approach for evaluating and regulating the Fitness-For-Duty Program.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robert L. Seale
Chairman

References:

Memorandum dated June 24, 1997, from A. Singh, ACRS, to John J.

Barton, ACRS, transmitting the following:

1. U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Listing of Recommended Modifications to Proposed Revisions to 10 CFR Part 26, dated June 16, 1997.
2. Attachment A, Listing of Potential Modifications to Proposed Revisions to 10 CFR Part 26 that are not Recommended.
3. Attachment B, Text of Rule Showing Recommended Changes.
4. U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Draft NUREG, "Fitness for Duty in the Nuclear Industry: Responses to 1996 Public Comments," dated June 9, 1997.