

June 20, 2017

Mr. W. Anthony Nowinowski, Program Manager
PWR Owners Group, Program Management Office
Westinghouse Electric Company
1000 Westinghouse Drive, Suite 380
Cranberry Township, PA 16066

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE FOR REVIEW OF THE PRESSURIZED WATER REACTOR OWNERS GROUP TOPICAL REPORT PWROG-16043, "PWROG PROGRAM TO ADDRESS NRC INFORMATION NOTICE 2012-09: IRRADIATION EFFECTS ON FUEL ASSEMBLY SPACER GRID CRUSH STRENGTH FOR WESTINGHOUSE AND CE PWR FUEL DESIGNS" (CAC NO. MF9280)

Dear Mr. Nowinowski:

By letter dated February 1, 2017 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML17039B050), the Pressurized Water Reactor Owners Group (PWROG) submitted Topical Report (TR) PWROG-16043-P, Revision 2, "PWROG Program to Address NRC Information Notice 2012-09: "Irradiation Effects on Fuel Assembly Spacer Grid Crush Strength" for Westinghouse and CE PWR Fuel Designs," to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff for review.

The NRC staff has found that the material presented is sufficient to begin our review. The NRC staff expects to issue its request for additional information by March 30, 2018, and issue its draft safety evaluation (SE) by September 3, 2018. This schedule information takes in consideration the NRC's current review priorities and available technical resources and may be subject to change. If modifications to these dates are deemed necessary, we will provide appropriate updates to this information. The review schedule milestones were discussed and agreed upon in a telephone conference between PWROG Project Manager, Chad Holderbaum, and the NRC staff on June 14, 2017.

Section 170.21 of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* requires that TRs are subject to fees based on the full cost of the review.

Section 1.4 of PWROG-16043-P specifies the limited scope review being requested by PWROG. This section clearly states that this topical does not "revise and or modify the current NRC-approved grid and fuel assembly test methods, or the fuel assembly seismic and loss-of-coolant accident analysis methodologies, processes and codes." Section 1.3 of PWROG-16043-P goes on to state that this topical report "does not supercede the NRC-approved TRs WCAP-9401-P-A (Reference 1-3) and CENPD-178-P, Rev. 1-P (Reference 1.4)." The NRC staff understands the limited scope review being requested and does not intend to expand its review into the underlying, legacy seismic methods within WCAP-9401-P-A or CENPD-178-P, Rev. 1-P.

However, issues identified within these legacy methods during recent and ongoing new reactor reviews (i.e., AP1000 and APR1400) may need to be addressed prior to use of the revised end of life fuel characteristics and damping coefficients in PWROG-16043-P.

As a result, the staff's safety evaluation may include a limitation and condition defining issues with the legacy methods, which need to be resolved prior to use of PWROG-16043-P.

As with all TRs, the SE will be reviewed by the NRC's Office of the General Counsel (OGC) to determine whether it falls within the scope of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). During the course of this review, OGC considers whether any endorsement or acceptance of a TR by the NRC amounts to a rule as defined in the CRA. If this initial review concludes that the SE, with its accompanying TR, may be a rule, the NRC will forward the package to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for further review and consideration. Any review by OMB would impact the schedule for the issuance of the final SE. If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Brian Benney at (301) 415-2767.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Dennis C. Morey, Chief
Licensing Processes Branch
Division of Policy and Rulemaking
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Project No. 694

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE FOR REVIEW OF THE PRESSURIZED WATER REACTOR OWNERS GROUP TOPICAL REPORT PWROG-16043, "PWROG PROGRAM TO ADDRESS NRC INFORMATION NOTICE 2012-09: IRRADIATION EFFECTS ON FUEL ASSEMBLY SPACER GRID CRUSH STRENGTH FOR WESTINGHOUSE AND CE PWR FUEL DESIGNS" (CAC NO. MF9280)
 DATED: JUNE 20, 2017

DISTRIBUTION:

PUBLIC	RidsNrrDssSsib	KHsueh, NRR
RidsACRS_MailCTR	RidsNrrDpr	RLukes, NRR
RidsNrrLADHarrison	RidsNrrDss	PLPB r/f
RidsOgcMailCenter	BBenney, NRR	
RidsNrrDprPlpb	PClifford, NRR	

ADAMS Accession No.: ML17123A125; *concurred via e-mail **NRR-106**

OFFICE	NRR/DPR/PLPB/PM	NRR/DPR/PLPB/LA*	NRR/DSS/SNPB/BC*
NAME	BBenney	DHarrison	RLukes
DATE	5/10/17	5/9/17	5/26/17
OFFICE	NRR/DSS/TA	NRR/DPR/PLPB/BC	
NAME	PClifford	DMorey	
DATE	6/1/17	6/20/17	

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY