

August 30, 2017

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

FROM: Joseph J. Holonich, Senior Project Manager */RA/*  
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SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF JULY 27, 2017, MEETING ON THE INDUSTRY  
PLAN TO SUPPORT AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MECHANICAL  
ENGINEERS CODE CHANGES FOR LOW-VALUE  
EXAMINATIONS WITH HIGH OUTAGE IMPACTS

On July 27, 2017, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff met with representatives from utilities and the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss EPRI's work in developing a technical basis for the optimization of examination requirements that are perceived to have low inspection value by the licensees, but have a disproportionate higher impact on personnel safety and outage schedule. Information for the meeting can be found in Agencywide Documents Access Management System (ADAMS) Package Accession No. ML17191B135.

At the meeting, EPRI made a presentation describing its proposal on developing the technical bases for the optimization of multiple selected examination categories. A copy of the industry presentation can be found in the ADAMS package referenced earlier. During the presentation and meeting discussions, utilities reported that the technical bases will be used to submit relief requests to the NRC. In addition, they will be used to draft ASME Code Case(s) to seek alternatives to certain currently required ASME Code examinations.

The basis for these alternatives was that certain required examinations present low value in terms of assuring plant safety. At the same time these low-value examinations represent a high impact on plant operations in terms of outage time, resources, dose, etc.

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The following ASME Code Section XI, Examination Categories were discussed:

- 1) ASME Code Class 1, Examination Category B-B "Pressure Retaining Welds in Vessels Other Than Reactor Vessels," ASME Code Class 1, Examination Category B-D "Full Penetration Welded Nozzles in Vessels, ASME Code Class 2, Examination Category C-A "Pressure Retaining Welds in Pressure Vessels," and ASME Code Class 2, Examination Category C-B "Pressure Retaining Nozzle Welds in Vessels."
- 2) ASME Code Class 1, Examination Category B-N-1 "Interior of Reactor Vessel," Item Number B13.10, VT-3 visual examinations of the accessible areas of the reactor-vessel interior, once per inspection period.
- 3) ASME Code Class 1, Examination Category B-G-1 "Pressure Retaining Bolting, Greater Than 2 in. (50.8 mm) in Diameter," and ASME Code Class 2, Examination Category C-D "Pressure Retaining Bolting, Greater Than 2 in. in Diameter."

During the meeting it was indicated that the technical bases for each of these are in the early stages of development. EPRI and utility representatives stated that feedback received from the NRC staff will be used to address some of concerns expressed by the staff during this meeting. Furthermore, it was agreed that since these types of information exchanges are very useful, additional meetings should be held as more information becomes available through industry efforts to develop these ASME Code Cases.

In closing, participants noted that the meeting was very informative. During the closing discussions, the subject of using probabilistic tools in regulatory applications was raised. The NRC staff pointed to a recent staff presentation at the ASME 2017 Pressure Vessels and Piping Conference (ADAMS Accession No. ML17208B020) for information on using probabilistic tools in regulatory applications.

There were no actions from the meeting.

D. Morey

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**ADAMS Accession Nos.: Package (ML17191B135); Summary (ML17192A079); \*concurrence via e-mail NRC-001**

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