



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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MEMORANDUM FOR: R. Boyd, Director, Division of Project Management  
R. Heineman, Director, Division of Systems Safety  
V. Stello, Director, Division of Operating Reactors  
H. Denton, Director, Division of Site Safety and  
Environmental Analysis

FROM: Ben C. Rusche, Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor  
Regulation

SUBJECT: REVISED PROCEDURE FOR DOCUMENTATION OF DEVIATIONS  
FROM THE STANDARD REVIEW PLAN

NRR Office Letter No. 2, issued on August 12, 1975, directed the staff to use the Standard Review Plan to assure consistent evaluation of all applications. It also directed that, except for clarification and correction of errors, the Standard Review Plan would remain fixed until any proposed change of substance was considered by the Division Directors, reviewed by the Regulatory Requirements Review Committee, and then authorized by the Director, NRR.

NRR Office Letter No. 9, issued on June 18, 1976, addressed the special problem associated with implementation of Office Letter No. 2 in operating license reviews when the construction permit reviews were not conducted on the basis of the Standard Review Plan guidelines. It noted the necessity to document decisions made on bases other than those defined in the Standard Review Plan and, of equal importance, the reasons for the acceptability of such bases. It then directed the staff to develop, for my approval, procedures for documenting the bases for deviations from the Standard Review Plan in each operating license Safety Evaluation, and to implement those procedures for all operating license Safety Evaluation Reports issued after January 1, 1977. My memorandum of September 20, 1976, approved an implementing procedure recommended to me by the NRR Division Directors. This procedure addressed both operating license and construction permit applications.

The experience gained in attempting to use the implementing procedure for operating license reviews nearing completion has shown that, contrary to our expectation at the time the procedure was developed, the staff is unable at this time to conform to the requirements of the implementing procedure without incurring a substantial delay in

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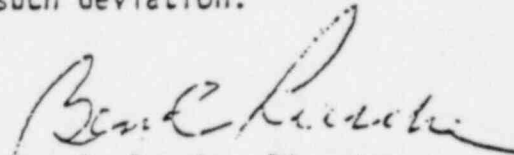
completing the reviews for these applications. While there is no concern as to the safety level established by the staff review, the fact remains that a significant effort would be required at this time for the staff to identify, for an ongoing operating license review, all deviations from the acceptance criteria set forth in the Standard Review Plan and to document the bases for the acceptability of these deviations. The Division Directors have now recommended that I withdraw the directive set forth in my memorandum of September 20, 1976, and in its stead issue a superseding directive establishing an alternate program that would:

- (1) Require the staff to assess the Standard Review Plan, determine any changes needed to assure that all requirements therein are realistic and practical of achievement, and initiate the actions needed to implement those changes in accordance with the policy established in NRR Office Letter No. 2.
- (2) Require the staff to implement the policy established in NRR Office Letter No. 9 for all construction permit applications docketed after September 1, 1976.
- (3) Require the staff to implement the policy established in NRR Office Letter No. 9 for all operating license applications docketed after January 1, 1977.

The Division Directors have indicated that approval of the proposed alternate program would permit the staff to conduct its review of operating license applications, almost from the start of such reviews, with the knowledge that conformance to Office Letter No. 9 would be a requisite for licensing. Such timely knowledge should limit the impact of this requirement on the schedule for completion of the staff review. I have also been informed that if the alternate program is approved, then four operating license applications that would have otherwise been required to conform to Office Letter No. 9 will not be required to so conform.

I have decided to approve the recommended alternate program. This approval is based on (1) the conviction that the singular issue is one of documentation and not safety, (2) the knowledge that the alternate program will permit a limited number of operating license applications (four) to be added to the number reviewed without the need to completely conform to the procedure, and (3) the staff itself

is not prepared to implement the procedure in a timely manner for the four applications involved. Accordingly, my memorandum of September 20, 1976, is withdrawn and is superseded in its entirety by this memorandum. In essence, the procedure for documentation (Enclosure 1) remains unchanged for construction permit reviews but modified so that only limited participation will be required of licensees involved in operating license reviews, and the implementation program (Enclosure 2) has been modified so that the appropriate Safety Evaluation Reports, including those associated with operating license, construction permit, and design approval applications, will document deviations from the Standard Review Plan and the bases for the acceptance of such deviation.



Ben C. Rusche, Director  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosures:

1. Procedure for Documentation of Deviations from the Standard Review Plan
2. Implementation Program

cc w/enclosures:  
NRR Technical Personnel