

DMB-016

JUN 22 1981



Dr. W. D. Walker, Chairman
Department of Physics
Duke University
Durham, North Carolina 27706

Dear Dr. Walker:

Mr. Griffith of the Department of Energy forwarded your letter of March 11, 1981, in order that we could consider and respond to your comments regarding nuclear power plant licensing and standardization.

The NRC is required by law to conduct a public hearing for the construction permit application and is required to offer the opportunity for a public hearing for the operating license application. A hearing on the operating license application is not required unless the pending licensing board admits at least one valid contention proposed by intervenors. This process ensures that any information available from the public pertaining to the construction and operation of the plant will be addressed during the course of our review. This process also provides the public with a means to better understand the relative safety of the plant. In the usual case, the details of the specific plant safety features are not known until the operating license stage, with only general design criteria provided in the application for a construction permit.

We recognize that in some recent licensing proceedings there may be a significant impact on the plant startup schedules. Consequently, we are endeavoring to improve our licensing procedures to minimize this impact. These improvements consist of a one-step review to identify and resolve the significant safety and environmental issues early in the licensing process in order to allow sufficient time for the hearings. In addition, we are pursuing similar improvements for the hearing process itself.

With regard to your recommendation for standardization of nuclear plants, the NRC began a program to develop licensing procedures for "standard" designs in 1974. Subsequently, the NRC issued policy statements on the licensing provisions for standardization in 1977 and 1978. At the present time, all of the reactor manufactures offer standard nuclear steam supply systems and the majority of architect-engineering firms have standard designs for the balance-of-plant (i.e., supporting systems and structures). We are currently considering how we might modify our standardization policy to further improve the licensing process. A copy of our current standardization policy is enclosed for your information.

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Dr. W. D. Walker

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JUN 22 1981

We appreciate the time that you have taken to offer your thoughts and recommendations. Should you have any further comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
Darrell G. Eisenhut

Darrell G. Eisenhut, Director
Division of Licensing

NO → Enclosure: *Received in Central Files*
As Stated

cc: J. D. Griffith, DOE

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6/10/81
Done on comment
McGuire comment on comment noted for legal objection 2

OELD - McGuire
5/15/81

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SUBJECT: DOCUMENT REQUEST

IN ORDER TO COMPLETE OUR FILES, CENTRAL FILES NEED THE FOLLOWING:

_____ COMPLETE PACKAGE OF YELLOW FOR CENTRAL FILES

X _____ ATTACHMENTS MENTIONED IN LETTER

_____ OTHER: _____

RETURN TO CENTRAL FILES, ROOM 016, MAIL STOP 042

THANKS

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