Docket File

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

March 10, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NRR Project Directors

THROUGH: John N. Hannon, Director
Project Directorate III-3
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

FROM: Allen G. Hansen, Lead PM
Project Directorate III-3
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: MPA A-17: INSTRUMENTATION TO FOLLOW THE COURSE OF AN ACCIDENT (REGULATORY GUIDE 1.97)

REFERENCE: Memorandum dated January 29, 1991 to all Project Managers from Claudia M. Abbate, Lead PM

Introduction

Since the issuance of the above reference, progress has continued on NRR's efforts to close out this MPA, particularly with regard to generic issues for PWR's and BWR's. This memorandum forwards the safety evaluation for PWR's which determines the appropriateness for relaxing the environmental qualification requirements for accumulator pressure and level instrumentation. In addition, the status of the BWR neutron flux issue is presented.

BWR Plants

The BWR Owners Group appeal regarding post-accident neutron flux monitoring instrumentation was moving toward resolution last summer. Then, the incident at Nine Mile Point Unit 2 occurred (loss of control room indication due to the failure of five uninterruptible power supplies), leading to further reflection by NRR. A meeting is scheduled between NRR and the BWROG in March to discuss the implications of the Nine Mile Point incident on the neutron flux monitoring issue. After the meeting, NRR will review all of the available data and determine an appropriate course of action to follow to close out this issue. Once a determination is made, all BWR Project Managers will be informed of the results and any required actions.

PWR Plants

A large number of Regulatory Guide 1.97 exception requests were received from PWR licensees asking that the environmental qualification requirement for accumulator level and pressure monitoring instrumentation be relaxed. Prior to 1987, these requests were denied by the staff. Since then, these exception requests have been considered as open items until a generic resolution could be found.

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The staff has now reviewed the bases for these exceptions and has concluded that no operator action is based on this post-accident instrumentation and that it does not perform a safety function. In addition, successful performance of core cooling systems can be inferred from other environmentally qualified instrumentation. Since this instrumentation does not perform any post-accident safety function, its qualification requirements can be reduced to Category 3.

PWR Project Managers should forward a copy of the SE (Enclosure 1) to their licensees, informing them of this determination. Prior commitments to Category 2 made by the licensees may be rescinded, so the licensees can utilize Category 3 instrumentation at their discretion. Licensees that have not made a commitment should be informed so that they can finalize their approach. If a question concerning instrumentation range still remains open, please contact Barry Marcus of SICB at 504-2823, Room 9G20, for resolution of the issue.

A sample letter (Enclosure 2) is attached. I have the SE and sample letter in WordPerfect and will forward it to you via E-Mail if requested (just send a one-line message to "HANSENA" and I will attach the file to my reply). Please provide me with a copy of correspondence to the licensee.

If you have any questions regarding these issues, please do not hesitate to contact me at 504-1390, Room 13E22.

original signed by

Allen G. Hansen, Project Manager
Project Directorate III-3
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosures:

1. PWR SE for accumulator level and pressure instrumentation

2. Sample letter to PWR licensees

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