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PROPOSED RULE PR-73
(49 FR 23867)

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TRANSNUCLEAR, INC.

August 13, 1984

Secretary of the Commission
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555

Attention: Docketing and Service Branch

Re: Proposed Rule-Modification of Protection
Requirements for Spent Fuel (FR Vol. 49 No. 112)

Gentlemen:

Transnuclear, Inc. is a fuel cycle service company providing engineering and operating systems worldwide for radioactive material handling, packaging, transport and storage.

We are currently involved in several major spent fuel shipping campaigns. These include shipment of 206 fuel assemblies from West Valley, New York to the Dresden Nuclear Power Station in Illinois, shipment of 224 BWR fuel bundles from West Valley to the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station in New Jersey and the shipment of spent fuel from foreign test and research reactors to USDOE facilities in South Carolina and Idaho.

Over 200 of these research fuel shipments have been performed over the past six years and have required us to meet past as well as present safeguard regulation.

At the time the present rules became effective, Transnuclear was opposed to the increase in safeguard requirements because we believe the threat of sabotage as well as the postulated consequences resulting from a successful breaching of a spent fuel cask were exaggerated.

We also felt that once regulations were put into place, they could not easily be revoked at a later date, even if they were shown not to be necessary.

The presently proposed rule to reduce the safeguard requirements for greater than 150 day cooled fuel would appear at first glance

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add Carl B. Sawyer
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Acknowledged by card... *8/17/84* *pd*

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to reduce costs for performing such shipments and also reduce the time required to coordinate the shipments.

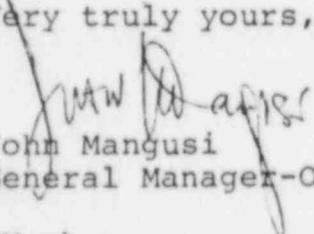
However, now that the rules have been in effect for several years, local and state regulatory and enforcement officials have accepted the theme of the present federal rules and have initiated their own rules. In most cases these state rules are more comprehensive than the federal rules and typically require armed escorts for all spent fuel transports within the state boundary rather than only in high population density areas. It appears that the presence of armed guards has led to some relaxation of concerns by some public officials and the general public.

There is, therefore, no assurance that elimination of the armed guard requirements in the federal regulations will be followed by similar changes by the individual states.

To the contrary, states which currently rely on the federal regulations may now impose new regulations to fill the gap. If such is the case, costs will probably increase, not decrease, and shipment coordination will become more difficult.

Transnuclear is in favor of any rule which truly will reduce transport and manpower costs, but it is not clear that the proposed rule will in fact accomplish that goal.

Very truly yours,


John Mangusi
General Manager-Operations

JM:nb