



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 1, 1996

Mr. K. P. Donovan, Chairman
 Boiling Water Reactor Owners' Group
 c/o Centerior Energy
 Perry Nuclear Power Plant, MC A210
 10 Center Road
 Perry, Ohio 44081

SUBJECT: TRANSITION FROM THE IGSCC QUALIFICATION PROGRAM TO THE PERFORMANCE
 DEMONSTRATION INITIATIVE PROGRAM

Dear Mr. Donovan:

In a letter dated January 23, 1996, the Boiling Water Reactor Owners' Group (BWROG) submitted a proposal to the NRC for implementing the next step in the transition plan for intergranular stress-corrosion cracking (IGSCC) qualification of inspectors using the Performance Demonstration Initiative (PDI) program. The IGSCC qualification of inspectors was originally agreed to by NRC, BWROG, and the Electric Power Research Institute in the IGSCC Coordination Plan, dated July 3, 1984. When Appendix VIII of Section XI of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code is implemented within the nuclear industry, the performance demonstrations of ultrasonic inspectors could be simplified by combining aspects of the IGSCC Coordination Plan with the requirements of Appendix VIII. The PDI program was developed to satisfy Appendix VIII requirements and as an alternative to the IGSCC Coordination Plan.

Previously, in a letter dated March 23, 1994, the BWROG proposed extending the IGSCC qualification of inspectors with valid qualifications as of March 1, 1994, an additional 2 years. The 2-year extension was to provide for the smooth transition from the IGSCC Coordination Plan into the PDI program and to provide the NRC staff the time to implement rulemaking by referencing Appendix VIII of Section XI of the ASME Code in 10 CFR 50.55a. The NRC concurred with the request to extend examiner qualification by 2 years in a letter dated May 5, 1994. The extension cutoff date (March 1, 1996) is approaching, and the subject rulemaking has not been completed. Furthermore, the PDI program is still being reviewed by the NRC staff. Therefore, to continue an orderly transition toward the PDI program for BWR IGSCC inspector qualification, the NRC staff approves the following actions while the staff proceeds with rulemaking and completes its review of the PDI program.

1. Effective March 1, 1996, IGSCC examiner qualification may be obtained by passing the appropriate test of either the PDI program or the original IGSCC program. Examiner qualification for weld overlays will continue as it currently exists under the IGSCC Coordination Plan until weld overlay qualification is incorporated in the PDI program. The need to include weld overlay qualification in the PDI program is considered an outstanding issue to be discussed with PDI in a meeting on March 7, 1996.

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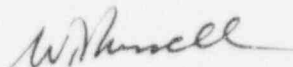
2. BWR IGSCC examiner qualification for detecting and sizing IGSCC in piping and weld overlays is acceptable for up to 5 years from the date of the last qualification examination before March 1, 1994. Examiner qualification acquired on or after March 1, 1994, is acceptable for 3 years under the IGSCC Coordination Plan and 3 years under the PDI program. Using the PDI program for qualification of BWR IGSCC examination personnel is preferred over using the IGSCC Coordination Plan. The proposal to extend examiner qualification to 5 years will also be discussed with PDI on March 7, 1996.

3. When an examiner obtains IGSCC qualification from the PDI program, subsequent requalification must be performed under the PDI program. To avoid maintenance of dual BWR IGSCC qualification programs, it is intended that the PDI program will eventually replace the IGSCC Coordination Plan and that the IGSCC Coordination Plan will subsequently be dissolved.

4. The registry of qualified personnel for ultrasonic examination of IGSCC that is being maintained for the IGSCC Coordination Plan should be expanded to include IGSCC qualified examiners from the PDI program.

Outstanding issues identified herein and in the letter to PDI dated August 11, 1995 (Enclosure 1), and the NRC assessment report enclosed with the letter (Enclosure 2),¹ will be discussed in a meeting on March 7, 1996 between the NRC staff and PDI. Any changes to the PDI program resulting from the March 7, 1996, meeting will be incorporated into future revisions to the PDI program.

Sincerely,



William T. Russell, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosures: As stated

cc/w enclosures:

J. Lance, EPRI
B. Sheffel, PDI
R. Dyle, BWROG

¹The PDI assessment report was revised to eliminate all proprietary information and to incorporate editorial changes.

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Original Signed By
WILLIAM T. RUSSELL

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* See previous concurrence

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