

November 12, 1996

MEMORANDUM TO: James L. Milhoan, Deputy Executive Director
for Nuclear Reactor Regulation,
Regional Operations and Research

FROM: Thomas T. Martin, Director original signed by:
Division of Reactor Program Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: WITS ITEMS 9100167 AND 9000143

The subject WITS items established annual reports to and annual briefings for the Commission on the status of the reviews of the advanced and evolutionary reactors. These tracking items served the Commission well when the staff was involved in the review of two evolutionary designs, two passive designs and multiple other advanced reactors. Recent staff efforts have involved only the two evolutionary designs, the ABWR and ABB-CE System 80+ and one passive design, the Westinghouse AP600. Action on the evolutionary designs is before the Commission in the form of final rules. The staff is awaiting the Commission's SRM on this subject to proceed with issuance of the final rules. With respect to the AP600, the staff has before the Commission a paper (SECY-96-128) on policy issues. The staff earlier informed the Commission (SECY-96-068) that it was developing an overall schedule for the certification of the AP600. Westinghouse on October 15, 1996, submitted new dates for their submittal of the information necessary to complete the AP600 review. The staff is meeting with Westinghouse on November 12, 1996, to discuss a new schedule. The November 12, 1996, discussions with Westinghouse and those that will occur later in the month of November 1996, coupled with a Commission SRM on the policy issues are expected to result in a final AP600 schedule. This schedule will be reported to the Commission. However, it is too early (without the SRM on policy issues and detailed discussions with Westinghouse on the remaining review items) to set a date for the submittal of this new schedule.

It appears, however, that the annual report and briefing are no longer necessary. The staff's activities on design certification are confined to the evolutionary designs (now before the Commission) and the AP600 (policy issues before the Commission). The annual report scheduled for this fall (due to the EDO on November 15, 1996) would only duplicate the information now before the Commission on the three designs. Furthermore, staff action following the SRM on the ABWR and ABB-CE System 80+ should be complete before the annual spring briefing and all that would be left would be the AP600 review. The staff is already committed to inform the Commission on various items associated with this review (schedule, Final Safety Evaluation and proposed certification). Therefore, the annual report and briefing appear to duplicate information that already is or will be before the Commission and the tracking items should be dropped.

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