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

March 12, 1997

Dr. E. Thomas Boulette, Chairman
Nuclear Safety Research Review Committee
Senior Vice President, Nuclear
Pilgrim Station
Boston Edison Company
600 Rocky Hill Road
Plymouth, MA 02360

Dear Dr. Boulette:

The Commission has requested a meeting with the entire NSRRC on May 2, 1997, to discuss NSRRC recommendations on Committee effectiveness and coordination with other NRC advisory committees (November 1996 meeting topic) and to discuss issues raised in the September 1996 SRM to Boulette. These issues are:

- Coordination of NSRRC and ACRS activities in areas of joint interest to ensure that the activities are supportive and complimentary and not duplicative (emphasis added by DLM);
- NSRRC should continue to review the progress of human factors research;
- NSRRC should identify those human factor aspects that can be treated adequately in PRA as well as those areas where progress for inclusion in PRA is likely; and
- NSRRC should provide recommendations for integrating these human factors considerations into PRA methods.

Given that there never has been coordination between NSRRC and ACRS in the past, and given that NSRRC members have busy schedules, I believe that a good start has been made on coordination. The activities that have taken place are:

- Nov. 22, 1996, Golay attended the ACRS PRA subcommittee meeting;
- Dec. 5, 1996, Mitchell had planned to attend the full ACRS meeting but had to cancel due to illness;
- Dec. 18-19, 1996, and Feb. 12-14, 1997, Bankoff attended ACRS thermal hydraulics subcommittee meeting; and
- April 1997, Yukawa plans to attend Materials subcommittee meeting.

The underlined phrase in the opening paragraph of this letter will be addressed toward the end to the letter, and the human factors issues will be addressed as a part of the agenda for the NSRRC meeting in April.

The following agendas are proposed for your consideration for the NSRRC meeting and the subcommittee meetings.

April 2, 1997 Accident Analysis Subcommittee

- Report on the ACRS Subcommittee meeting to discuss TH scaling by George Bankoff (circulate Bankoff's letter to Catton in advance)
- Discussion of ACRS report on TH
- Discussion of ACRS coordination
- Discussion of open issues

April 2, 1997 Materials and Engineering Subcommittee

- Response by staff to questions posed by Subcommittee Chairman
- Discussion of open issues
- Discussion of ACRS coordination

Since Tom Boulette is a member of both subcommittees, each subcommittee should meet only one-half day.

April 3 and 4, 1997 NSRRC Meeting

- Reports by Subcommittee Chairmen
- Accident Analysis
- Materials and Engineering
- I&C and Human Factors/PRA Subcommittee
- Report of NAS final report, "Digital Instrumentation and Control Systems in Nuclear Power Plants. Safety and Reliability Issues", by Christine Mitchell
- Core research capabilities
- Industry meeting report by John Taylor
- Current status by David Morrison
- Preparation for May meeting with Commission
- Other issues

These agendas for the April subcommittee meetings and full committee meeting are focused on preparing the NSRRC for its meeting with the Commission on May 2. These preparations should be done with a minimum of presentations by the staff in both the subcommittee and full committee meetings. The members of the NSRRC will want to be comfortable with the material they will be discussing with the Commission, and it is my opinion that the comfort level can best be gained through committee discussions.

There are two other reasons for limiting presentations by the staff. First, from now to April 25, RES staff will be devoting extraordinary effort to the preparation of the FY99 budget. The process and requirements for this year's budget submission are very different from prior years. There are significant changes to the budget structure and there is a need to develop interoffice plans and to identify resources to implement the Multi-Year Implementation Plan (MYIP). These changes are being driven by both the Strategic Assessment and Rebaselining process and the implementation of the Government Results and Performance Act. Second, RES has recently briefed the I&C and Human Factors

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Dr. E. Thomas Boulette

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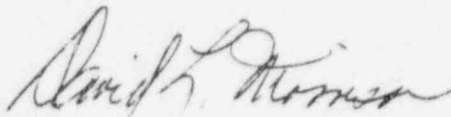
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Subcommittee and the Thermal Hydraulics Subcommittee of the ACRS at which George Bankoff was present. RES has no new material to present at the April 2 Subcommittee meetings on these topics.

I recommend that key RES staff attend the subcommittee meetings to address any questions that arise in the discussions among the members and to answer any key questions posed in advance by the Subcommittee chairmen. This approach should minimize the staff involvement and provide the opportunity for the NSRRC members to develop the positions that NSRRC wishes to discuss with the Commission. I would expect that the Subcommittee chairmen would make appropriate reports to the full committee, and RES will have key staff in attendance at the April 3-4 NSRRC full committee meeting to provide further details as required. Such participation by the staff would be in the spirit of the phrase highlighted in the first paragraph.

Please give me a call if you wish to discuss my recommendations.

Sincerely,



David L. Morrison, Director
Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research

cc: NSRRC Members