



Tennessee Valley Authority, Post Office Box 2000, Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee 37379

March 19, 1999

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Gentlemen:

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA) - SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT
(SQN) UNIT 2 - DOCKET NO. 50-328 - FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE
DPR-79 - RESPONSE TO NRC QUESTIONS CONCERNING LEAD TEST
ASSEMBLY (LTA) MATERIAL HISTORY

This letter is provided at the request of the NRC to answer questions related to the LTA material history.

1. "Has the LTA material ever been irradiated?"

Yes, the uranium not meeting commercial specification provided by the United States Department of Energy (DOE) for use by TVA pursuant to the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) Privatization Act (April 1996) has previously been irradiated in DOE weapons material production reactors.

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2. "Is the ORNL Report history statement correct?"

Yes, the statement in the Chemical and Isotopic Analyses section of the Topical Report is correct. The LTA material was a combination of scrap, floor sweepings, and casting dross from the uranium/aluminum metal processing at the Savannah River site in accordance with DOE Report Y/ES-261/RO, "Characterization Summary of Candidate Off-Specification Material for Transfer to the Tennessee Valley Authority." (The report was produced by the highly enriched uranium [HEU] Disposition Program Office at Oak Ridge Y-12 Plant.)

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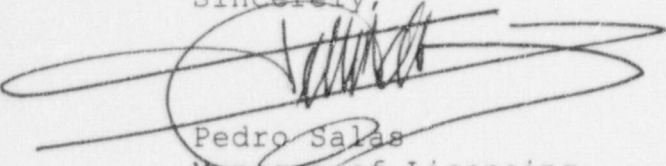
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3. "Where did the LTA material come from?"

The LTA material has been downblended from HEU from the DOE's Savannah River site. According to DOE, this HEU is from various steps in their historical weapons material production cycle and was fuel for DOE tritium production reactors. This material was a part of the 200 MT of fissile material declared excess to national security by President Clinton in March of 1995, and which DOE determined in a July 1996 Record of Decision was to be downblended to LEU to make it nonweapons-usable and converted for commercial use. In April 1996, as referenced in Item 1 above, Congress passed the USEC Privatization Act, which authorized DOE to transfer off-specification uranium to a Federal agency (TVA) for its own use. The material has never previously been part of the commercial nuclear fuel cycle.

If you have any questions about this response, please telephone me at (423) 843-7170 or J. D. Smith at (423) 843-6672.

Sincerely,



Pedro Salas
Manager of Licensing

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