



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555
August 15, 1979

Honorable Morris K. Udall
Chairman
Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Udall:

Since December 28, 1978, the ACRS has been conducting a review of Licensee Event Reports (LERs) submitted during calendar years 1976, 1977, and 1978 in order to identify those events which have implications for improved reactor safety, consistent with your letter of November 28, 1978 to Chairman Hendrie. A copy of the ACRS Report on LERs should be completed during September 1979.

In your more recent letter of July 27, 1979 to the Chairman, ACRS, you expressed your interest in the report and addressed two additional matters. With regard to the first, the ACRS does not believe that LER data, of themselves, are adequate to establish failure rates which can be directly compared with WASH-1400 data. For example, LERs do not provide information on the population of components subject to failure.

However, the Probabilistic Analysis Staff of the NRC Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research is continuing to collect failure rate data, from a variety of sources, which may be adequate to supplement the information in LERs so that such a direct comparison can be made in the future. Other groups here and abroad also have such studies under way. It would be of interest to review the results of such studies in preparing a response to your question concerning failure rates. The ACRS has directed one of its Subcommittees to work with the NRC Staff in developing a report. This effort will probably take more than six months, especially if it is to have the benefit of studies by foreign groups.

Your second question, concerning the probability of the Davis-Besse and Rancho Seco transients, will also be pursued by an ACRS Subcommittee.

The Committee plans to proceed in the fashion described above, as rapidly as practicable, and will respond to your questions as soon as the appropriate information is developed.

Sincerely,

Max W. Carbon
Chairman