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Secretary
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

ATTN: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff

Dear Sirs:

Subject: Comments on Petition for Rulemaking to Improve the Process for Issuing and Amending Certificates of Compliance (CoC) for Dry Cask Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel

In the June 9, 2000 Federal Register (65 FR 36647), the NRC published for public comment a petition for rulemaking filed by the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) requesting that the NRC regulations governing storage of spent nuclear fuel be amended to establish a more efficient process for issuing and amending certificates of compliance (CoC) for dry cask storage of spent nuclear fuel under a general license. The petition has been assigned Docket No. PRM-72-5 by the NRC.

Arizona Public Service Company (APS), as the licensee for the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, supports the NEI petition for rulemaking, and emphasizes the need for improving the dry cask CoC issuance and amendment process without delay. Particularly, the current process that requires revising Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations to amend a spent fuel storage cask CoC imposes an unnecessary, time consuming administrative burden with no benefit to safety or to the ability for public participation in the process. It is inevitable that cask CoC amendments will be needed in the future because of the specificity in spent fuel cask technical specifications and design features that have been issued as appendices to the CoCs, and because of the dynamic nature of engineering technology and differences in implementation of casks at different sites. Improving the administrative efficiency of the cask CoC amendment process will result in a long term benefit to the NRC and to the CoC holders and ISFSI Licensees as more and more cask CoC amendments are needed as a result of the increased use of spent fuel storage casks by general licensees.

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APS also encourages the NRC to continue to work with the industry to establish simplified, standard cask technical specifications that would reduce the need for CoC and cask technical specification amendments, but would not reduce safety.

No commitments are being made to the NRC by this letter.

If you have any questions, please contact Scott A. Bauer at (623) 393-5978.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angela Klein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

AKK/SAB/GAM/kg

cc: E. W. Merschoff
M. B. Fields
J. H. Moorman
L. Hendricks
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