

November 13, 2003

Mr. James Mallay
Director, Regulatory Affairs
Framatome ANP
3815 Old Forest Road
Lynchburg, VA 24501

SUBJECT: CLARIFICATION OF SAFETY EVALUATION FOR EMF-2310(P)(A),
"SRP CHAPTER 15 NON-LOCA METHODOLOGY FOR PRESSURIZED
WATER REACTORS" (TAC NO. MB7338)

Dear Mr. Mallay:

In response to our May 11, 2001, safety evaluation (SE) on the subject topical report (TR), Framatome requested clarification of certain statements in the SE. The NRC provided clarification to the specific concerns by letter dated March 11, 2003. Framatome provided its understanding of the staff's clarifications by letter dated May 30, 2003, and requested that the NRC review and acknowledge Framatome's positions as an accurate reflection of the staff's intent. Framatome's May 30, 2003, letter does not completely and accurately reflect the staff's intent. This letter further clarifies some of the positions discussed in the staff's March 11, 2003 letter.

Our clarification letter of March 11, 2003, was clear with respect to what information was to be provided by licensees with the plant-specific amendment requests referencing TR EMF-2310(P)(A). As the staff stated in its SE, a generic TR describing a code such as S-RELAP5 cannot provide full justification for each specific plant application. In order to provide the necessary plant-specific demonstration of applicability of the TR, the staff expects a description of the nodalization method or the nodalization diagram, and the specific range of values used for parameters in the code to be submitted with the plant-specific application. Framatome's proposal to include a skeleton of the guidelines, and not the specific parameters used, would not provide the necessary information related to the development of the nodalization of the plant or the validity of the specific application of the methodology for the staff to make its findings. The staff expects licensees to provide the specific information described below when revising their technical specifications (TSs) to reference the subject TR.

Nodalization - The staff expects that licensees will submit the nodalization diagram for one of the events covered by EMF-2310(P)(A) and explain any differences from the nodalization used for the reference demonstration plant.

Chosen Parameters, Sensitivity Studies, and Conservative Nature of Input Parameters - The staff expects that licensees will submit and justify plant-specific values used in the analysis for one of the events covered in EMF-2310(P)(A).

Calculated Results - The staff continues to believe that licensees using the approved TR must submit the results of the analysis for one of the events covered in EMF-2310(P)(A) to the staff.

The FSAR change process set forth in 10 CFR 50.59 cannot be used to adopt the specific methodology addressed in the TR SE. In accordance with 10 CFR 50.59(c)(1)(i), the change process can only be used when a change to the TSs is not required. A change to the licensee's TSs is required in this situation in order for the licensee to use the methodology referenced in the TR. In this regard, Generic Letter 88-16, "Removal of Cycle-Specific Parameters from Technical Specifications," outlined a process that licensees could use to move cycle-specific parameters from the plant-specific TSs to a licensee-controlled document entitled the Core Operating Limits Report (COLR). A necessary element of that process was that licensees include specific methodologies in the TSs. The reference TR is one such methodology that is required to be listed in the TSs. Therefore, in light of the fact that the licensee opted to move cycle-specific parameters from its TSs into the COLR, its use of a methodology to generate those parameters requires a change to the TSs.

Finally, Framatome expressed concern that similar letters have not been sent to their competitors. The NRC has recently issued or is in the process of issuing several SEs to other reactor vendors that document the same positions contained in the May 11, 2001, SE, the March 11, 2003, clarification letter, and those repeated here. We believe that this letter provides the necessary closure to the remaining concerns you have identified related to the implementation of this TR and the plant-specific submittal requirements.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Herbert N. Berkow, Director
Project Directorate IV
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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