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MEMORANDUM FOR: Robert C. Pierson, Chief
Licensing Branch
Division of Fuel Cycle Safety
and Safeguards, NMSS

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FROM: Marc Klasky
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SUBJECT: SITE VISIT TO COMBUSTION ENGINEERING (CE), HEMATITE,
MISSOURI

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DISCUSSION:

On October 5, 1993, a site visit to CE Hematite was made to discuss criticality safety issues pertaining to the renewal of License SNM-33. The meeting began with an introduction by CE personnel (John Conant, Bob Klotz, and Hal Eskridge) followed by a plant tour. The tour included the processing of uranium hexafluoride and the assembly of fuel rods.

Discussions were held with CE representatives on the license renewal process. CE representatives were informed of the approach Nuclear Regulatory Commission plans to pursue in reviewing the criticality safety portion of the renewal application. It was stated that NRC expects to see more specificity throughout the application. Specifically, the application should contain a thorough description of the process; a description of specific controls that are utilized in each process to fulfill the double contingency principle; a description of plausible upset conditions, along with a list of the necessary controls that demonstrate adherence to the double contingency principle; commitments in Part I of the application that present the basis for safety for each process; and more thorough criteria in Part I of the application for the use of controls utilized in fulfilling the double contingency principle. CE representatives expressed concern that specifying specific controls for each process in Part I of the application would impair operating the facility. We responded by stating that a 50.59 change provision would also be incorporated into the renewed license.

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Two specific methods were discussed for providing more specificity (including specific controls for each process) in Part I of the application while giving the licensee the ability to make 50.59 changes. In the first method, the licensee would list the controls in Part I of the application and state that at least two of the controls presented would be utilized at any given time. The legality of this approach was briefly discussed before it was decided that a formal legal opinion would be necessary. The second method would require the licensee to commit to a specific method of controlling a process (e.g., moderation, mass, concentration, etc.), along with the acceptance criteria (which would serve as the technical specification for that process) in Part I of the application. In this approach, the licensee could replace original controls as long as the method by which safety was provided was unchanged and the technical specifications for that process were not violated.

Discussions were conducted to address the specific controls utilized for individual processes in fulfilling the double contingency principle. Illustrations were given of the NRC-envisioned specificity for the controls that the licensee would be expected to commit to in Part I of the application. Also discussed were acceptance criteria utilized in determining the adequacy of controls utilized to fulfill the double contingency principle.

It was agreed that a follow-up meeting between CE representatives and NRC would take place in approximately 6 weeks. At this time, NRC expects CE to propose specific controls for each process.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:
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