

D860812

Honorable Lando W. Zech, Jr.
Chairman
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

SUBJECT: ACRS COMMENTS ON THE NRC POLICY STATEMENT ON FITNESS FOR
DUTY OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANT PERSONNEL

Dear Mr. Zech:

During its 316th meeting, August 7-9, 1986, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards reviewed the NRC Policy Statement on Fitness For Duty of Nuclear Power Plant Personnel. This matter was also discussed during a meeting of the ACRS Subcommittee on Human Factors on July 15, 1986. We had the benefit of the document referenced.

The Committee last addressed this matter in the letter to Nunzio J. Palladino, NRC Chairman, on August 9, 1983 entitled, "ACRS Report on the Rule Concerning Fitness for Duty of Nuclear Power Plant Personnel." In that letter, we noted that the proposed rule would not apply to NRC inspectors and said that such an exemption was inappropriate.

The current Commission Policy Statement on Fitness for Duty of Nuclear Power Plant Personnel continues to exempt NRC employees who have unescorted access to vital areas in nuclear power plants. We are informed that the NRC Staff is developing a fitness for duty program which would apply to these employees. We applaud the NRC Staff initiative and recommend that the Commission encourage continued development of the program and place it into effect as soon as possible. We wish to be kept informed of its progress.

Further, the Committee endorses the random chemical testing of body fluids as an element in effective fitness for duty programs and encourages its incorporation by nuclear utilities into nuclear power plant fitness for duty programs.

Sincerely,

David A. Ward
Chairman

Reference:

SECY-86-153, "Fitness For Duty of Nuclear Power Plant Personnel," memo for the Commissioners from V. Stello, Jr., Executive Director for Operations, dated May 14, 1986

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