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RECIP.NAME RECIPIENT AFFILIATION
DENTON,H.R. Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: Notifies that GE will submitr Vol IIof rept on assessment of BWR mitigation capabilities re ATWS for current BWR product lines.Rept contains sufficient info for NRC to proceed w/ ATWS rulemaking based on Alternate 3 of NUREG-0460.

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Docket No. 50-397

December 26, 1979
G02-79-231
Telecopy: M. D. Lynch

Mr. Harold R. Denton
Director, Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Subject: WPPSS NUCLEAR PROJECT NO. 2
RESOLUTION OF ATWS

Reference: Letter, HR Denton (NRC) to all licensees and applicants, dated October 17, 1979, same subject

Dear Mr. Denton:

Your October 17 letter to all power reactor licensees and license applicants implied that unless all the information needed for early verification was provided in time for the rulemaking on ATWS scheduled for early 1980, the design basis accident approach (Alternate 4) would be pursued. The General Electric Company will submit, at the end of the month, Volume II of its report on the assessment of BWR mitigation capabilities with respect to ATWS for the current BWR product lines. We have reviewed the report and feel that the report contains sufficient information for the NRC to proceed with an ATWS rulemaking based on no more than Alternate 3 of NUREG-0460.

Your letter also encouraged the formation of utility/owners groups to minimize impact on staff and industry resources. We wish to emphasize that the utilities have also been impacted very heavily by efforts related to TMI and thus we are extremely interested in generic approaches and utility/owners groups. As you know the BWR-TMI Owners Group comprises virtually every BWR either operating or under construction. We have been working with General Electric in a similar fashion on ATWS for the past several years.

We are concerned that the Staff is being open ended in its requirements for early verification and rulemaking. General Electric's report represents a great deal of effort and is responsive to the needs of the

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Staff to verify the feasibility of the technical approach presented in Alternate 3 to mitigate ATWS. Sensitivity studies were performed to cover the range of BWR's since time constraints have prohibited plant unique analyses. We are in the process of doing our own plant unique evaluation with respect to the GE report and evaluation of the balance of plant conditions imposed by the results of the analyses in the GE report. This evaluation clearly could not proceed until the GE report defining the conditions was completed. We are working directly with General Electric in this regard and preliminary assessment of the results indicates no substantial problems should arise. On this basis, we feel the staff has the information it needs to proceed with rule-making based on no more than Alternate 3. Imposition of other requirements on the ATWS evaluation unrelated to the ATWS event itself, (e.g. safety grade criteria, seismic + ATWS, etc) should not be imposed on the early verification program which is to verify the technical feasibility of Alternate 3 to allow a rule to be written with the confidence that it can be implemented.

We wish to participate in any meetings on ATWS. We and other BWR owners have obviously a great deal of interest in the prompt resolution of ATWS and wish to promote any efforts within our means to achieve this end. We feel the GE report is responsive to the Staff's needs so rulemaking can proceed.

Very truly yours,

D L Renberger

D. L. RENBERGER
Assistant Director
Technology

DLR:OKE:cph

cc: A. Thadani - NRC
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