



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

June 8, 1979

NOTE TO: Walt Paulson, P-432

FROM: G. Harrison

SUBJECT: RFPA NO. RES-78-220 (FIN B6302), "DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF A
MODEL FOR FIRE POTENTIAL IN NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS"

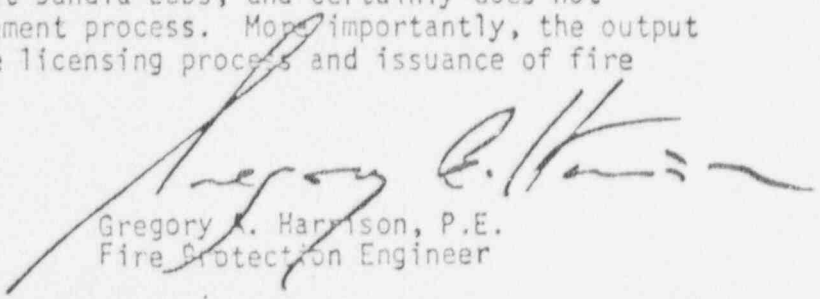
Per your request the subject ~~request~~ was reviewed from the viewpoint of avoiding duplication and usefulness.

The justification for accepting the subject project states that only RPI is qualified to do the job. The Center for Fire Research, one of the foremost fire research organizations in the world, is located at the National Bureau of Standards. Located therein is a most prestigious fire modeling section composed of internationally recognized, researchers, e.g. Dr. John Rocket, et. al. Additionally, a fire-risk systems analysis program staffed with operations researchers, fire and reliability engineers, et. al. and funded in the order of millions of dollars also exists. I would think that Sandia Laboratories is also qualified. Therefore, it is hard to see how or why RPI is the only source for the accomplishment of the subject task. Competition is not, therefore, precluded as stated in the Justification.

Calculation of probabilities for fire initiated events has a minimal role in the licensing process. Of special interest, the GSA (the fore runner for using systems analysis and probabilities in fire protection for buildings) is now abandoning this approach altogether. Why? Fire protection decision making is based under conditions of uncertainty and not risk. Furthermore, a research effort at Sandia in this same subject area has been previously turned off as of March, 1979. A NUREG report is due out shortly on the work completed to date.

It is my understanding that all RES fire research effort was to have been stopped after the September, 1978 UL fire test and re-structured into confirmatory fire testing by order of the Commission. The subject work is not compatible with this. Further, I do not think this effort would be supported by DOR or DSS.

In summary, the subject request for a fire research effort is probably duplicative of ongoing efforts at Sandia Labs, and certainly does not qualify as a sole source procurement process. More importantly, the output would be of minimal value to the licensing process and issuance of fire protection SERs.


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