



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

January 7, 1997

Mr. Robert G. Carter
Electric Power Research Institute
Nuclear Power Division
1300 Harris Blvd.
Charlotte, NC 28262

SUBJECT: BWR VESSEL AND INTERNALS PROJECT BEST ESTIMATE CHEMISTRY
DETERMINATION

Dear Mr. Carter:

This letter is a follow up to the telephone conversations we had on December 13, 1996 and December 17, 1996 regarding the BWR Vessel and Internals Project (BWRVIP) activities in response to Generic Letter (GL) 92-01, Revision 1, Supplement 1, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Structural Integrity."

In the way of background, by letter dated November 15, 1995, the BWRVIP submitted the proprietary Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) report TR-105908P, "BWR Vessel and Internals Project, Bounding Assessment of BWR/2-6 Reactor Pressure Vessel Integrity (BWRVIP-08)," dated November 1995. This report was supplemented by letter dated June 27, 1996, which forwarded the non-proprietary version of this report (TR-105908NP). The report was provided as a generic response to the information requests 2 through 4 in GL 92-01, Revision 1, Supplement 1. The report stated that, as part of a longer term effort to address reactor vessel integrity issues identified in the Generic Letter, the BWRVIP would continue to investigate the possible existence of vessel fabricator data not previously provided to nuclear steam supply system vendors or utilities and to resolve data discrepancies. The BWRVIP also committed to report progress on this ongoing work to the NRC as the work is completed. The final response to GL 92-01, Revision 1, Supplement 1 is still expected by mid 1997, and the search should not be limited to just fabricator data. The possible existence of all new data should be investigated. (e.g., surveillance data that may have been generated by General Electric).

During our teleconference on December 13, 1996, you indicated that the BWRVIP has concerns regarding the cost of searching for possible additional data and believes that these cost may not be justified based on the BWRVIP's belief that the best estimate chemistry for BWRs can be bounded by using conservative chemistry values as described in BWRVIP-08.

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*During the December 13, teleconference, the NRC staff reiterated that, per GL 92-01, Revision 1, Supplement 1, the BWRVIP is required to provide a description of those actions taken or planned to be taken to locate all data relevant to the determination of RPV integrity. The staff also restated its position on best estimate chemistry to you and other members of the BWRVIP during a teleconference on December 17, 1996. Specifically, the staff stated that although use of bounding values for licensing actions would be acceptable, it is necessary to collect available data in order to demonstrate that the values used are, in fact, bounding and to provide an accurate integrated basis upon which reactor vessel integrity can be assessed. Therefore, it is our expectation that an effort will be made to provide reasonable assurance that previously unidentified chemistry data are identified and considered in BWR vessel evaluations.

Please contact C. E. (Gene) Carpenter, Jr. of my staff at (301) 415-2169 or Andrea D. Lee at (301) 415-2735 if you have any further questions on this subject.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:
K. Wichman

Keith R. Wichman, Acting Branch Chief
Materials and Chemical Engineering Branch
Division of Engineering
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

cc: see next page

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*See previous concurrence.

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DATE	12/18/96*		12/18/96*		12/23/96*		12/23/96*		12/19/96	1/3/97

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