



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

April 2, 1997

Mr. Ronald Simard, Director  
Advanced Technology  
Nuclear Energy Institute  
1776 I Street, NW  
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Washington, DC 20006-3708

SUBJECT: DRAFT REPORT ON THE REVISED CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION PROGRAM

Dear Mr. Simard:

In 1991, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) began a revision to the Construction Inspection Program (CIP) governed by Inspection Manual Chapter (IMC) 2512, "Light Water Reactor Inspection Program - Construction Phase." The purposes of this project were to address programmatic weaknesses in NRC construction inspections that had been identified during the licensing of several plants and to develop an inspection program to meet the needs of evolutionary and advanced reactors.

At that time, the staff intended to develop the CIP inspection manual chapter and its companion database management system in as much detail as available plant design information would allow, after which the CIP and all associated development documentation and software would be archived for future use. Because there are no industry plans to apply for either a combined license or a construction permit in the near term, and because of competing priorities for staff resources, NRR has suspended CIP development. The revised program, to the extent that it has been developed, is documented in the enclosed draft report on the Revised Construction Inspection Program.

The draft report summarizes the status of the CIP revision, including the methods and assumptions used in developing the revised program, and it presents a possible approach to construction inspection for future nuclear power plant construction projects. It also includes a draft revision of IMC 2512, tables of preoperational phase inspection procedures, inspection procedure format and content guidance, and a description of the CIP Information Management System (CIPIMS).

The draft report documents insights gained during the CIP development project into plant construction and the associated NRC inspections, and it provides a basis on which to resume program development when the next application for a nuclear power plant combined license or construction permit is submitted. It does not necessarily represent the staff's final positions on approaches or issues related to future NRC construction inspections. Further, it does not intend to mandate any particular approach to, or in any way confine the procedures and processes that may be used during, nuclear power plant construction. Unresolved issues pertaining to future construction inspection and nuclear power plant licensing are summarized in the report.

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The NRC staff does not intend to take any action to further develop the CIP until it becomes aware of serious interest in constructing a new nuclear power plant. When development is resumed, it will require approximately two years to finalize the program and begin using it to implement construction inspections.

Any comments or questions regarding the enclosed draft report should be directed to Pat Castleman ((301) 415-3747) of NRR's Inspection Program Branch. Comments on the draft report will be retained by the staff for resolution in the future.

Sincerely,

Original signed by R.W. Borchardt for;

Frank P. Gillespie, Director  
Division of Inspection and Support Programs  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure: As stated

cc: See attached list.

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