NOTATION VOTE

RESPONSE SHEET

TO: John C. Hoyle, Secretary

FROM: COMMISSIONER MCGAFFIGAN

SUBJECT: SECY-97-075 - METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING CORE RESEARCH CAPABILITIES

Approved x (with comment) Disapproved _____ Abstain _____

Not Participating _____ Request Discussion _____

COMMENTS:

See attached comments.

Edward McGaffigan Jr.
SIGNATURE

May 27, 1997
DATE

Release Vote / x /

Withhold Vote / ___ /

Entered on "AS" Yes x No ____

Commissioner McGaffigan's comments on SECY-97-075

I compliment the staff on its substantial efforts in formulating methodology and criteria for evaluating core research capabilities and I generally agree with what the staff proposes. However, I have some concerns with the staff's proposal --

1. I do not necessarily agree with the RES view (p. 8) that a "program has, for all practical reasons, been sunset" where resources continue to be expended in a given area of research despite the fact that there are very low or no demands from users. To me, a program is sunset when it is at an end. I would be interested in RES's view as to whether the Hydrogen Distribution and Combustion Program at the core level described in Attachment 9 would be considered to be sunset, and, if not, how low that program would go in a sunset state.

2. I generally agree that the criteria for judging need for Support Areas 1 through 4 are appropriate and, from the examples in Attachments 9 and 10, properly weighted. Based on the example application in Attachment 9, I am not certain that the criteria for Support Area 5 are properly weighted. For example, most of the ratings in Attachment 9 are "low" or "none" except for the ratings for the criteria in Support Area 5, which are "high" or "moderate". These ratings appear to have resulted in a determination that a core capability requiring almost one percent of our Research budget should be retained for Hydrogen Distribution and Combustion Program. Yet I believe that it will be difficult to demonstrate a need for a core expertise-driven research capability in this area after the AP600 work is done. To me, involvement in research with domestic and foreign organizations in the absence of strong scores in Support Areas 1 through 4 does little to demonstrate a need to maintain core capabilities and should not be given the same weight as other criteria in Support Areas 1 through 4.

3. The criteria in Support Area 6 appear to be redundant and to result in a double counting relative to Support Areas 1 through 4.

4. I commend the staff for providing the examples in Attachments 9 and 10 but note my belief that it may be difficult to demonstrate a need to retain core research capabilities in the Hydrogen Distribution and Combustion area based on the evaluation presented in Attachment 9. That is, Attachment 9 may have intended only to "document" (in the sense of "lay out the analysis on") a need for an expertise-driven core capability in this area, but it did not appear adequate to "demonstrate" such a need. I will reserve judgement on this area until the staff provides its assessment for all 39 Areas.

5. I agree with Commissioner Diaz' comment that although RES has the lead in the assessment of the need for core research capabilities, the core technical capabilities in NRR, AEOD, and NMSS need to be analyzed and incorporated into the overall scope of the core capability assessment, especially the need for a separate expertise-driven capability in RES. I note the SRM on DSI-22 asked the EDO by June 1 to recommend an approach to creating and maintaining an agency-wide data base on the core technical capabilities in the staff. This effort, once underway, should be integrated with the core research capabilities analysis.

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

OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY

June 6, 1997

MEMORANDUM TO: L. Joseph Callan
Executive Director for Operations

FROM: John C. Hoyle, Secretary

SUBJECT: STAFF REQUIREMENTS - SECY-97-075 - METHODOLOGY AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING CORE RESEARCH CAPABILITIES

The Commission has approved the proposed methodology and criteria for evaluating core research capabilities and provides the staff the flexibility to make minor modifications to the methodology and criteria if needed.

The staff should ensure that the areas of research identified for assessment include those areas that are essential for the support of current and foreseeable future regulatory activities. In addition to the inputs provided from other NRC user offices, areas of research suggested by the industry should also be considered. When documenting the core capabilities assessments, the staff should make it much more clear as to how the recommended resource levels for each core research area were determined.

(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 11/3/97)

The SRM on DSI-22 (COMSECY-96-066, dated March 28, 1997) tasked the staff to recommend an approach to creating and maintaining an agency-wide data base on the core technical capabilities in the staff. Also, the SRM on DSI-18 (COMSECY-96-027, dated August 26, 1996) tasked the staff to develop an action plan to include a process for identifying the agency's skills and core capabilities requirements. The core technical capabilities residing in NRR, AEOD, and NMSS should also be analyzed and incorporated into the overall scope of activities and integrated with the core research capabilities analysis.

(EDO) (SECY Suspense: 12/19/97)

SECY NOTE: THIS SRM, SECY-97-075, AND THE COMMISSION VOTING RECORD CONTAINING THE VOTE SHEETS OF ALL COMMISSIONERS WILL BE MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE 5 WORKING DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THIS SRM.

The staff should review the level of resources being applied to research activities that are in a "sunset" state. The weighting of criteria for Support Areas 5 and 6 should also be reviewed.

cc: Chairman Jackson
Commissioner Rogers
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
OGC
CIO
CFO
OCA
OIG
Office Directors, Regions, ACRS, ACNW, ASLBP (via E-Mail)
PDR
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