

January 24, 2002

Dr. George E. Apostolakis, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555-0001

SUBJECT: PROPOSED STEAM GENERATOR PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND
ASSOCIATED GENERIC LICENSE CHANGE PACKAGE

Dear Dr. Apostolakis:

In your December 14, 2001, letter regarding the review by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) of the subject topic, you concluded that: (1) NEI 97-06, "Steam Generator Program Guidelines," and the related Generic License Change Package describe a steam generator tube management program that is flexible enough to accommodate evolving technical knowledge and could provide an enforceable regulatory framework and (2) you concurred on the staff's conclusion that there is a need for additional technical justification to support the industry's proposal to extend the inspection intervals for plants with thermally treated alloy 600 (i.e., 600TT) and alloy 690TT tubes beyond that currently permitted by regulations. In addition, you indicated there was a need to review the relevant global operating and laboratory databases for these alloys.

I appreciate the efforts of the ACRS in reviewing the proposed steam generator regulatory framework. As was discussed in the 488th meeting of the ACRS, the industry is developing a proposal and associated technical basis for inspection intervals at plants with alloy 600TT and 690TT thermally treated tubes. It is expected that the technical basis and proposal will address comments and questions that the NRC staff had on the original draft of Revision 6 of the "PWR Steam Generator Examination Guidelines." Furthermore, it is expected that the industry will discuss relevant global operating and laboratory databases in their report. In addition, the staff will evaluate opportunities to participate in information exchanges with the regulators of the affected countries.

Dr. George E. Apostolakis

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As the ACRS indicated, the Generic License Change Package provides a greater degree of performance-based capability. These capabilities will be enhanced as additional data and methods supporting inspection and repair criteria and tube integrity assessments are developed.

Sincerely,

/RA by William F. Kane Acting For/

William D. Travers
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Meserve
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield
SECY

