

February 15, 2012

Mr. Thomas J. O'Connor, Director
Office of Gas Cooled Reactor Technologies
NE-73, Room D-427
U.S. Department of Energy
19001 Germantown Road
Germantown, MD 20874

SUBJECT: NEXT GENERATION NUCLEAR PLANT—PLANNING NEXT STEPS IN VIEW OF
WHITE PAPER ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Dear Mr. O'Connor:

Pursuant to our discussions regarding continuing interactions on the Next Generation Nuclear Plant (NGNP) project, the Advanced Reactor Program staff convened two working groups to assess and provide comment on five NGNP white papers. The working groups prepared assessment reports that have recently been transmitted to Mr. Jim Kinsey of the NGNP project at the Idaho National Laboratory. A copy of the transmittal letter and the assessment reports is enclosed. Note that these assessment reports reflect the considered opinions of the members of the working groups but should not be construed as formal staff positions in the context of future licensing activities.

The working groups' preliminary assessment, based on the high-level information that has been provided to date, is that many of the technical issues noted in the assessment reports can be addressed within the context of the Project's ongoing and planned development efforts. Some of the more challenging issues, however, appear to warrant more extensive research or operational data from relevant sources.

In view of the contents of the enclosed assessment reports and the interest you have expressed to focus on issues associated with source term, containment functional performance, licensing basis event selection, and emergency planning, we suggest holding working-level meetings in the near term to discuss the following proposed steps and milestones for our remaining interactions in calendar year 2012:

1. Identify and prioritize those technical and policy-related issues that can be usefully addressed through specific interactions in 2012 (by March 16).
2. Clearly identify and frame a set of potential policy issues in terms of information, options, and recommendations that would have to be developed to support eventual resolution (by March 30).
3. Identify how special features and programs in the NGNP prototype plant can be used to facilitate effective resolution of technical and policy issues (by April 6).

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4. For high-priority issues, propose goals to be achieved in 2012 and a schedule of necessary actions, milestones, and deliverables (by April 6).
5. Agree on a final set of goals with scheduled actions, milestones, and deliverables in 2012 (by May 18).

An early outcome of the proposed steps outlined above would be clarification and agreement on the issues, priorities, and goals for our continuing interactions on NGNP.

Please contact Jeffrey Cruz (Jeffrey.Cruz@nrc.gov, 301-415-0599) or Donald Carlson (Donald.Carlson@nrc.gov, 301-415-0109) if you have questions regarding the enclosed assessment reports or proposed next steps.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Michael E. Mayfield, Director
Division of Advanced Reactors and
Rulemaking
Office of New Reactors

Project No.: 0748

Enclosures:
As stated

cc: Jim Kinsey, INL

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cc: Jim Kinsey, INL

ADAMS Accession No.: ML120240682

***via e-mail**

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