

The Honorable Lando W. Zech, Jr.  
Chairman  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Zech:

SUBJECT: ACRS REPORT ON THE RESTART OF THE SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT

During the 335th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, March 10-12, 1988, we met with members of the NRC Staff and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Staff and reviewed the status of the resolution of the issues relating to the restart of the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant. This subject was also considered during our 328th, 331st, and 334th meetings on August 6-8, 1987; November 5-7, 1987; February 11-13, 1988, respectively. Our Subcommittee on TVA Organizational Issues met on November 5, 1987 and February 2-3, 1988 to discuss this matter. We also had the benefit of discussions with the NRC Staff and of the documents referenced. The ACRS has previously commented on this matter in letters dated August 12, 1986 and February 19, 1988.

During our review, we discussed the Sequoyah Nuclear Performance Plan and its review by the NRC Staff. Areas discussed included the plant management organization, plant modification and design control, design baseline and verification program, design calculations program, fire protection, environmental qualification of electric equipment, operational readiness program, quality assurance, Integrated Design Inspection, employee concerns program and several related issues, systems integration reviews, safety review programs, diesel generator testing and capability, installation and testing of electric cables, and feedback of operating experience. We believe that problems and deficiencies associated with these areas are being adequately addressed.

We are satisfied with the resolution proposed for the problems with the electric cables that are installed at the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant. However, we recommend against the continued use of high-voltage testing of installed low-voltage cables. Nondestructive test methods should be employed for in situ testing of cables. Some of the methods being evaluated in the NRC research programs on plant aging are available commercially and should be considered,

The testing and analysis by TVA of the Sequoyah diesel generators have demonstrated their adequacy to perform their safety functions.

A number of fire protection issues have been identified and are being investigated by the NRC Staff. Some of these appear to have generic implications and will be discussed as generic issues in our subcommittee activities relating to fire protection. We will report on this at a later date. The Appendix R (10 CFR Part 50) issues relating to the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant

startup should be resolved to the satisfaction of the NRC Staff.

Significant improvements have been made in TVA's nuclear power organization. However, careful monitoring of the restart of Sequoyah Nuclear Plant and the other TVA nuclear plants is appropriate. We recommend that the Commission continue to maintain a separate office for the review of TVA nuclear power plants. We recommend also that a plant-specific PRA and ISAP be considered after the restart process has been completed.

We believe that the problems and deficiencies identified at the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant are being addressed adequately, and we see no reason to delay the program for restart.

Sincerely,

William Kerr  
Chairman

References:

1. Letter dated March 9, 1988 from Wang Lau, Knoxville, Tennessee, to Charles J. Wylie, ACRS, Subject: Meeting of ACRS Subcommittee on TVA Organizational Issues on February 2, 1988
2. Letter dated February 17, 1988 from Stewart D. Ebnetter, Director, Office of Special Projects, to S. A. White, TVA, transmitting Revised Safety Evaluation on the TVA Sequoyah Nuclear Performance Plan, NUREG-1232, Vol. 2, Part 1

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