

[ATTACHMENT 4]

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION,
Washington, D.C., February 11, 1975.

Docket Nos 50-275 and 50-323.

A. GIAMBUSSO,
Director, Division of Reactor Licensing.

DIABLO CANYON REVIEW

The following table provides key dates associated with the Diablo Canyon case:

	Unit 1	Unit 2
CP application.....	Jan. 16, 1967	June 28, 1968
CP issued.....	Apr. 23, 1968	Dec. 9, 1970
OL application.....	July 10, 1973	July 10, 1973

We and our consultants (U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey) concurred with the applicants' selected geological and seismological bases for design. This included an SSE of 0.4g. We and our consultant (N. M. Newmark) concurred with the applicants' selected criteria for seismic design, including the design spectra and damping values and the methods to be used for the design.

At the current time Unit 1 construction is over 90% complete and the fuel load date is estimated to be about November of this year. The fuel load for Unit 2 is estimated to be about nine months later.

Our OL review is nearing completion. The SER with a few notable omissions was issued on October 16, 1974. The principal omission was our assessment of the geology and seismology for the site. New information had become available during the course of our OL review and our evaluation and that of the U.S. Geological Survey was not complete at the time the SER was issued. An SER Supplement was prepared for issuance on January 31, 1975. The staff had tentatively concluded that, considering the new information available, an SSE value of 0.5g would be appropriate for the site. The staff had also determined that the as-built facility would be able to withstand such an acceleration but with little or no margin for many elements of the design. The staff expected that its consultant's (U.S. Geological Survey) report would not conflict with its tentative conclusion on the 0.5g value. The Survey's report was received on January 28, 1975, and staff representatives

met with representatives of the Survey on January 31, 1975, to discuss the Survey's position. The significant aspect of that position is that the Survey, on the basis of now available information, believes that an acceleration in excess of 0.5g is more appropriate for the Diablo Canyon site.

We have met internally on this problem several times in the recent past up to the Assistant Director level. On the basis of these discussions, my opinion of the situation and steps that need to be considered is as follows:

1. The applicant is aware of the current status and is attempting to acquire additional information to alter the Survey's opinion. It expects to submit additional information about March 1, 1975. The assessment of that information by the Survey and the staff will result in an SER Supplement about May 1, 1975. The ACRS has scheduled a two-day Subcommittee meeting at the site for February 18 and 19. However, the Committee will probably not consider the Diablo Canyon application until its June meeting. Because of the nature of the problem and the "hard" decision that must be made, I would anticipate a second meeting might be necessary two months after the first meeting unless the staff can propose a strong policy-type decision at the first meeting. In any event, the application is strongly contested and I would anticipate that the PDD will be later than the date at which Unit 1 will be ready to load fuel.

2. The current "best guess" of our geology-seismology staff is that the final Survey position may well relax from its present state (the present position would result in an SSE value of about 0.7g) but will not likely result in an SSE value less than about 0.6g. The current "best guess" of our structural-mechanical staff is that the current design will not be able to be demonstrated to be acceptable for a seismic loading in excess of 0.5g. An extensive reanalysis could be undertaken by the applicant but will probably show that some parts of the plant are capable of withstanding various loadings in excess of 0.4g, 0.5g, 0.6g, and 0.7g, but that other vital parts will not have such capability. Some increase in capability is possible from design changes that might be undertaken but changes sufficient to bring the design up to a 0.6-0.7g capability are impractical. The design reanalysis could take up to a year or two to complete.

3. The staff is faced with a horrendous backfit decision. The decision will likely be based on both technical and policy considerations. While the technical considerations may be altered by additional information that may develop during the next month or so, the degree of alteration is not expected to be significant. Therefore, the basic problems that will exist and the basic decisions that will need to be made are known at this time. Those who will be involved in the policy decisions (the Commission cannot be involved according to T. Englehardt) should become knowledgeable with the situation as soon as practicable. Since the policy decisions will be influenced by the technical facts and practicalities involved, early involvement in the on-going technical review may be prudent. The earliest and most direct means of understanding the technical issues is probably through attendance at the February 18-19, 1975 Subcommittee meeting at the site. The Subcommittee will consist of Dr. Okrent and Dr. Bush (and perhaps L. Fox). In addition, up to eight ACRS consultants will participate. A copy of our meeting notice and the agenda for the meeting is attached. The proposed attendance by Dr. Coulter of the Geological Survey is indicative of the seriousness of the Survey's concern in the matter.

4. Consideration might also well be given to:

(a) Strengthening the legal contingent assigned to the case. In addition, a review might be made of the assigned ASLB to assure the level of credentials and experience is consistent with the task that is to be faced.

(b) Strengthening the engineering staff by providing for special consulting advice from groups and individuals such as Newmark Associates, Franklin Institute, Dr. J. Hendrie, etc.

(c) Establishment of a special policy advisory group to aid in the decision-making process. This might include individuals such as Dr. Kouts, D. Knuth, R. Minogue, etc.

I believe the above outlines the present situation as we in LWR-1 view it. I strongly recommend your immediate attention to this problem.

R. C. DEYOUNG,
Assistant Director for Light Water Reactors Group 1,
Division of Reactor Licensing.

Enclosure: Meeting Notice.