

No. S-95-16  
Tel. 301-415-8200  
Internet: opa@nrc.gov

COMMUNICATIONS: A CHALLENGE TO THE REGULATOR AND THE REGULATED

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, Commissioner  
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
before the  
Regulatory Information Conference  
The Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Hotel, Rockville, MD  
May 10, 1995

Thank you, Mr. Taylor for those introductory remarks and good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. It is a pleasure for me to address this year's annual Regulatory Information Conference. It is my understanding that this conference has provided an invaluable forum for the exchange of regulatory information with the industry since its inception some seven years ago. I want to express my appreciation for your past contributions and your willingness to join us here today. I also invite your continued and active participation in this important conference.

**General Remarks**

Let me make a few remarks about the NRC itself. As Mr. Taylor has stated, I will become the next Chairman of the NRC, following Dr. Selin's departure on July 1, 1995. This will be challenging. Chairman Selin's accomplishments at the NRC have been exemplary. The loss of Commissioner de Planque also will be keenly felt by the agency. Her contributions to the agency have been recognized by everyone. Fortunately, Commissioner Rogers will remain. I look forward to working with Commissioner Rogers as the agency meets the many challenges that lie ahead. I will also press the Administration to nominate appropriate candidates so that the Commission can be brought up to full complement as quickly as possible.

During my tenure, I will be reviewing NRC's implementation of its statutory responsibilities and seeking ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the agency. While science has made giant strides in communication in recent years, there is still a lot to be said for simply paying attention to one another. Having briefly skimmed through the Towers Perrin report, it is my impression that the conclusions of the report indicated some lack

of communication. Communication between the regulated and the regulators should be made on an open and continuous basis and must be a two way process.

Given the limited resources in the Government and the private sector, it makes sense for the regulators and the licensees to fully appreciate their respective roles and positions. To that end, communication is vital. My hope is that in the future, communication between individual licensees, industry groups, the public, and the NRC increases, within the bounds of our respective roles.

In that light, I would like to place a challenge to the industry. Let us work harder at resolving safety and administrative issues. There is no doubt in my mind that we will not agree on the means to resolve every issue. However, let us work together so that contested issues can be resolved through cooperation. In the long run, I believe that such cooperation would lead to improved efficiency at both the NRC and within the industry.

I want to assure you that I am a supporter of a consistent, fair, and reliable regulatory infrastructure. This is particularly important for the nuclear industry because public confidence in the safety of nuclear power depends, in part, on the perception that the NRC regulations are soundly based, open, and effectively and fairly administered. There is no doubt in my mind that the nuclear industry would suffer under weak regulatory oversight. At the same time, it is also true that a regulatory agency can harm the industry it regulates if its practices are unpredictable, unnecessary for protecting the public's health and safety, and are inconsistent with that required to fulfill its mission.

### **Concluding Remarks**

I am excited by the timing of my appointment on the Commission. I can see a variety of issues which will loom large for both the NRC and the nuclear industry between now and the end of this decade. I intend to make nuclear regulation as efficient as possible, while meeting our statutory responsibilities firmly but fairly for protection of public health and safety. In doing this, I intend to work to reduce unnecessary, that is not safety justified, regulatory burdens on the nuclear industry. Industry and public feedback will be essential in these efforts. I want to thank you for your attention and I hope to obtain positive feedback from this conference.

###