

July 13, 2000

The Honorable Sue W. Kelly
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-3219

Dear Congresswoman Kelly:

I am responding to your letter of June 5, 2000, concerning the Indian Point 2 Nuclear Power Plant (IP2). The Commission appreciates both your concerns and those of your constituency.

As you are aware, IP2 has been shut down since a steam generator tube failure event on February 15, 2000. Following the tube failure event, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) dispatched an Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) to IP2. A detailed report of the AIT findings was forwarded to you electronically on April 28, 2000. This report briefly addressed the unplanned discharge to the Hudson River that occurred on February 21 and 22, 2000. The discharge was the result of inadequate flushing of a section of piping before releasing water through that piping. While the Commission is concerned with any unplanned release of radioactivity, I would like to assure you that the amount of activity discharged was small. The NRC staff has conservatively estimated the amount of whole-body exposure that any member of the public might receive as a result of this unplanned discharge to be approximately .001 millirem, or roughly 100,000 times lower than the allowable annual exposure to a member of the public. In any event, the agency plans to continue the heightened NRC management oversight and detailed inspections of IP2 operations as indicated by the decision to designate IP2 as an "agency focus" plant in the most recent senior management meeting.

Since the February 15 event, Consolidated Edison Company (Con Ed) has inspected the tubes in all four steam generators. As a result of this inspection, Con Ed removed some tubes from service. Subsequently, Con Ed has evaluated the tube inspection data and submitted its Operational Assessment Report to the NRC. The NRC staff is reviewing Con Ed's report and, based on this review, will determine whether continued operation of IP2 poses any undue risk to public health and safety. I would like to assure you that the safety of the surrounding communities, as well as IP2 workers, will be central to the decision of whether to allow IP2 to restart.

I am pleased that you attended the public meeting on June 25, 2000, and stated your views on IP2. Your views and concerns are appreciated and I hope that the meeting served the purpose of explaining to the public the status of NRC's review of IP2 activities and issues, including steam generator integrity. I know we benefitted from receiving public comments.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz
Acting Chairman