

April 6, 2001

Mr. David A. Lochbaum  
Nuclear Safety Engineer  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
1707 H Street NW, Suite 600  
Washington, DC 20006-3919

Dear Mr. Lochbaum:

Your letter dated March 15, 2001, requests that the Special Inspection Team (SIT) reviewing the loss of offsite power event at Seabrook address certain topics described in the letter.

Some of the issues you raise will be addressed by the SIT. Specifically, the actions taken by the licensee in preparation for the severe weather and in response to the degraded offsite power, as well as the impact that the severe weather had on the alert and notification system, will be reviewed by the Special Inspection Team. We expect to provide you a copy of the Special Inspection Team report by May 15, 2001.

The question about operating Seabrook under adverse weather conditions has been previously addressed by the NRC. I have enclosed a copy of a letter to the Seacoast Anti-Pollution League that discussed Seabrook's operation during a winter storm in 1993. That letter reflects the staff's current position regarding this question. If you have additional questions relative to the information contained in this referenced letter, please contact Ms. Kathy Halvey Gibson, Chief, Emergency Preparedness and Health Physics Section, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. Ms. Gibson's phone number is 301-415-1086, and her email address is KHG@nrc.gov.

In closing, let me assure you that the NRC carefully followed the storm at Seabrook. The NRC staff was in contact with the Seabrook station and monitored licensee contingency planning and the progress of the storm, as well as the licensee's actions in response to the storm-related plant transient. An NRC inspector responded to the site during the storm, arriving coincident with the plant transient, monitored the licensee's actions in response to the transient, and maintained communications with a senior manager in the Region I office.

David A. Lochbaum

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I hope this information is responsive to your concern and clarifies the NRC's regulatory requirements regarding operation of nuclear reactors in storm conditions. If you have any additional questions concerning the special inspection or NRC's monitoring of activities at Seabrook, please contact Mr. Curtis J. Cowgill of this office at 610-337-5233.

Sincerely,

/RA/

A. Randolph Blough, Director  
Division of Reactor Projects

Enclosure: (1) NRC Letter to Seacoast Anti-Pollution League, dated April 8, 1993

Docket No. 05000443

License No. NPF-86

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