



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

REQUEST REPLY BY 7/9

COMMISSIONER

July 1, 1999

COMNJD-99-004

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Dicus
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield

FROM: Commissioner Diaz *[Signature]*

SUBJECT: COOPERATION WITH MEXICO

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The Convention on Nuclear Safety is serving to enhance cooperation on a broad array of reactor safety issues. Mexico and the U.S., partners under the North American Free Trade Agreement, are close neighbors, geographically, politically, and economically. It would be beneficial for both countries to develop additional cooperative ties, which could be covered by an addendum to the existing NRC cooperative agreement. In discussions with Mexico's Comisión Nacional de Seguridad Nuclear y Salvaguardias (CNSSN) pursuant to my upcoming visit to Mexico, the Director expressed interest in exploring an addendum in the near future of the following three areas.

- Establish a dedicated phone line between CNSSN and the NRC Emergency Operations Center. The purpose would be primarily to provide NRC meteorological assessment to CNSSN in case of an accident at Laguna Verde and meteorological/radiological data in case of a U.S. reactor accident that could affect Mexico. However, a secured link would serve us well in other radiological emergency needs. CNSSN is establishing multiple secured links with Laguna Verde.
- Initiate the nuclear safety codes cooperative program by waiving the first year's fee and minimal fee thereafter, as we have done for other countries.

Request staff's recommendations for development and implementation of an emergency evaluation exercise at Laguna Verde, with the involvement of Region II Regional Administrator Luis Reyes. Commission approval would be requested after the details and cost are worked out.

I respectfully request Commission approval for these simple but needed supporting activities at a critical time in Mexico's efforts to assert regulatory control over Laguna Verde. If approved, I would inform our Mexican colleagues during my upcoming visit. This will be cleared with the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, which has expressed support for the initiatives. If plans are finalized, the Director of CNSSN is willing to come to Washington to sign the agreement with Chairman Dicus or we can suggest other arrangements. A response by July 14, 1999, would allow me to be more effective in my discussions in Mexico.

SECY: Please track
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