

CORR: 01-0009

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Merrifield

COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence Response Sheet

Date: January 19, 2001

*Concur subject to
attached comments.*

To: Chairman Meserve
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield

[Handwritten signatures]
1/22/01

From: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary

Subject: Letter to Senator Charles E. Schumer concerns operations at Consolidated Edison's Indian Point 2 nuclear power station

ACTION: Please comment/concur and respond to the Office of the Secretary by:

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Day: Monday

Date: January 22, 2001

Comment:

Contact: Brian Holian, RG1/DRS
610-337-5128

Entered in STARS Tracking System Yes No

W/82



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Schumer:

I am responding to your letter dated January 4, 2001, ⁱⁿ ^{you} which raised concerns about operations at Consolidated Edison's Indian Point 2 nuclear power station. In particular, you raised concerns about leaks at Indian Point 2, and communications with local residents and officials regarding plant activities. You also requested that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) suspend operations at Indian Point 2 until additional inspections are conducted. Since receiving your letter, Mr. Thomas Madden from the NRC's Office of Congressional Affairs has been in contact with your office regarding these matters.

Consistent with our designation of Indian Point 2 as a plant warranting heightened scrutiny under our Reactor Oversight Program, we have been closely monitoring plant activities. We have conducted augmented inspections of Consolidated Edison's restart testing and power ascension program and have carefully assessed their handling of various equipment issues that have arisen during the restart process, such as the reported pressurizer relief valve leakage to the plant's pressurizer relief tank that you referred to in your letter. We have determined that this leakage, which by design is being retained by plant systems, is well below allowable NRC limits. This leakage is also well below levels that would affect ^{the operation of the} ~~continuing~~ safety valve function. _{adversely}

"CAPTURED" COULD IMPLY
OFFSITE AS WELL
AS ONSITE

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer

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It is important to note that the high-pressure reactor coolant systems at all nuclear power plants experience a very small amount of leakage that is routinely ^{retained by plant systems} captured and processed in a safe and controlled manner. ~~Therefore,~~ I can assure you that this leakage poses no threat to public health and safety or plant employees. ~~Additionally,~~ this leakage is fundamentally different from the leakage during the February steam generator tube failure, and

With respect to your concerns about communications, detailed information on plant status is most appropriately provided by Consolidated Edison. We have addressed this point with senior Consolidated Edison officials and understand they are now providing daily reports on plant status, including various problems being addressed at the facility, to local officials and interested Members of Congress. Regarding the NRC's efforts, we have worked diligently to apprise the public, government officials, and other external stakeholders of our oversight activities. In early 2000, the NRC established a Web site for the Indian Point 2 plant to facilitate communication to the public. Additionally, we have held numerous public meetings and provided reports of our inspections and assessments over the past year. For example, on November 16, 2000, a meeting was held specifically to provide recent inspection results and to inform stakeholders of the NRC's oversight of the Indian Point 2 restart. Additionally, stakeholders were informed by telephone on December 21, 2000, of the pending restart of Indian Point 2, and a letter providing the latest inspection and assessment information was issued on December 22, 2000. Finally, the NRC's Office of Congressional Affairs staff has been working with your staff to support your request for a meeting.

With respect to your concern about the need to suspend plant operations pending additional inspections, Consolidated Edison's operation of Indian Point 2, like all licensed power reactors, is subject to the terms and conditions of its license and the Commission's regulations.