

**CORR: 01-0011**

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**COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE**

**Correspondence Response Sheet**

**Date:** **January 22, 2001**

*Concur subject to  
attached comments.*

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

*[Handwritten signature]*  
*1/22/01*

**From:** **Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary**

**Subject:** **Letter to Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County, New York,  
concerns activities at Consolidated Edison's Indian Point 2  
nuclear power station**

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

**Time:** **1:30 p.m.**  
**Day:** **Monday**  
**Date:** **January 22, 2001**

**Comment:**

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

**Entered in STARS Tracking System**  **Yes**  **No**

*w/90*



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

CHAIRMAN

Mr. Andrew J. Spano  
County Executive  
Westchester County  
Michaelian Office Building  
White Plains, New York 10601

Dear Mr. Spano:

I am responding to your letter dated January 3, 2001, which raised concerns about activities at Consolidated Edison's Indian Point 2 nuclear power station. In particular, you requested that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) suspend operations at Indian Point 2 until additional inspections are conducted and also raised concerns about leaks at Indian Point 2. You also requested a meeting with a senior NRC official to brief you<sup>in you</sup> and other municipal representatives on the start-up process and steps being taken to ensure safe operation at the facility.

With respect to continued operation of the plant, 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. Consolidated Edison is authorized under its license to operate the facility within these strictures absent a Commission order that bars further operation. In light of the results of inspections to date and our ongoing oversight of licensee activities, the Commission believes it would be inappropriate to issue an order to suspend operations at Indian Point 2. This conclusion is based on inspections over the past several months that examined such things as safety system readiness, licensed operator training,

corrective actions, and aspects of emergency preparedness. Reports of these inspections have been made publicly available. Further, as you know, we have initiated a significant, supplemental team inspection to provide additional insights into facility operations at Indian Point 2. This inspection team is made up of over a dozen people from various NRC regional offices, NRC headquarters, and contractors. This inspection will consist of three weeks of on-site inspection activities and will include an examination of safety systems at Indian Point 2 as you referred to in your letter.

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. 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 continuing safety valve function. 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 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. Another issue that has received press coverage was a minor leak on a main boiler feedwater pump, which was from the secondary (non-radioactive) side of the plant. Upon discovery, Consolidated Edison took appropriate action to isolate the leak, repair the problem, and return the pump back to service. NRC regional and

MODIFY  
CONSISTENT  
WITH  
MY  
COMMENTS  
ON  
KELLY  
LETTER