

CORR: 01-0012

CORR: 01-0012

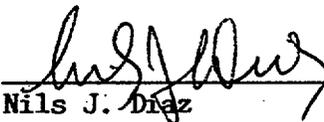
COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence Response Sheet

Date: January 22, 2001

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

Approved with attached edits.


Nils J. Diaz 01/22/01

From: Annette Vietti-Cook, Secretary

Subject: Letter to Representative Benjamin A. Gilman 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: 3:00 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/93



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

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Benjamin A. Gilman
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Gilman:

I am responding to your letter dated January 4, 2001, which raised concerns about activities associated with Consolidated Edison's Indian Point 2 nuclear power station. In particular, you raised concerns about communications, technical issues, plant operations, and Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) oversight activities. Since receiving your letter, Mr. Thomas Madden from our 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 ~~continuing safety valve function.~~ *the ability of the valve to continue to perform its safety 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

With respect to your concern about the need to suspend plant operations pending resolution of unresolved issues, 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 ^{requirements} ~~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 conducted 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. I understand that you were able to meet with the team leader during your January 15, 2001 visit to the Indian Point site. A local public meeting is being planned to summarize the results of this inspection.

I want to assure you that the NRC takes the health and safety of the public very seriously. If the NRC should find in the future that the licensee is not complying with NRC