

May 16, 2002

Mr. Vinicio Donato, Chairperson
City of New York
Community Board #1
Borough of Queens
c/o American Museum of the Moving Image
36-01 35th Avenue
Astoria, NY 11106

Dear Mr. Donato:

I am responding to your letter of March 21, 2002, to Chairman Richard Meserve of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), concerning the safety of the Indian Point Nuclear Generating Unit Nos. 2 and 3 (IP2 and 3). In your letter you stated that your Board recently resolved to urge the Federal Government to conduct a complete review of the ability of IP2 and 3 to withstand a terrorist attack.

We understand that many of our fellow citizens are concerned that a U.S. nuclear facility could be a target of future terrorist attacks. In view of the recent unprecedented events, Chairman Meserve, with the full support of the Commission, has directed the staff to undertake a thorough review of our security regulations and procedures, including the basic assumptions of our current programs. This review involves coordination with U.S. national security organizations. The NRC recently issued Orders to all operating commercial nuclear power plants to implement interim compensatory measures for the high-level threat environment. Some of the requirements formalize a series of security measures that NRC licensees had already taken in response to advisories issued by the NRC, and others are security enhancements which have emerged from the staff's ongoing security review. When the NRC staff completes its reevaluation of the physical security requirements, the Commission will be able to determine whether or not additional safeguards measures should be established.

Although we cannot rule out the possibility of future terrorist activity directed at one of our licensees' sites, we believe that these facilities can continue to operate safely. Nuclear power plants are inherently robust. Their design is based on defense-in-depth principles, and includes many features to protect public health and safety. Reinforced containment buildings and redundant safety systems would assist trained operators in preventing or limiting the release of radioactive material in the unlikely event of a terrorist attack. In light of the facility's defense-in-depth design, the heightened security measures implemented in response to the events of September 11, and the NRC's ongoing reevaluation of its safeguards regulations and programs, we do not consider the closure of IP2 and 3 necessary to provide adequate protection for the public health and safety.

V. Donato

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I trust that this addresses your concerns. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Stuart A. Richards, Director
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

V. Donato

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I trust that this addresses your concerns. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Stuart A. Richards, Director
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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