

June 28, 2002

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Clinton:

I am responding on behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your letter of May 15, 2002, in which you requested confirmation that the interim security measures imposed by Order on February 25, 2002, are still in place and that all nuclear reactor facilities in the Nation are in compliance with the measures specified. In addition, you requested a detailed report regarding the status of the NRC's reevaluation of the current security program and what additional security recommendations are expected in the final reevaluation, but are not included in the interim measures. Your letter also expressed a specific concern regarding reports in the media concerning the likelihood of a terrorist attack on a nuclear power plant on July 4, 2002.

First, let me address your concerns regarding the July 4 terrorist threat to nuclear power plants. The NRC continues to assess the threat environment in consultation with the intelligence and law enforcement communities, and has concluded that the July 4 threat is not credible. However, we are prepared to take appropriate action if the situation dictates.

You also requested confirmation of the status of interim security measures at nuclear reactors. All licensees have responded to the NRC's Order imposing certain interim compensatory measures (ICMs) and implementation of all aspects of the Order is required by August 31, 2002. The NRC will evaluate implementation of the ICMs through onsite inspection. The requirements will remain in effect pending notification from the Commission that a significant change in the threat environment has occurred, or until the Commission determines that other changes are needed following the reevaluation of the safeguards and security programs.

Finally, you asked that we provide a detailed report on the status of our comprehensive reevaluation of NRC safeguards and security programs. To date, we have issued Orders to the licensees of nuclear power plants, the Honeywell uranium conversion facility, gaseous diffusion plants, and decommissioning nuclear power plants, and we are preparing Orders for independent spent fuel storage installations using dry storage, fuel facilities, and licensees who ship or receive spent fuel or large quantities of radioactive material. We are also evaluating the need to issue Orders to certain other classes of licensees. We have performed a preliminary vulnerability assessment of power reactors against air attack and are refining the results. We have developed a pilot program to expedite criminal history checks. We continue to review the threat environment in coordination with other Federal agencies and expect that the staff will submit a proposed revision of the Design Basis Threat for Commission review by the end of the summer. We are also enhancing our ability to communicate sensitive and classified threat information to the licensees in a timely fashion. We continue to work with the Office of

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Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Defense and other agencies in the development of interagency response procedures and enhancements which will assist in cooperation and coordination efforts. Consolidation of the NRC's safeguards and incident response functions in the new Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response will help in this regard. In summary, although more remains to be done, we believe that significant progress has been made since September 11 toward ensuring the security of our Nation's nuclear power plants and radiological materials.

Please contact me if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Richard A. Meserve

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515