

July 1, 2002

Send as email to NORMELLIE@aol.com

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am responding to your May 22, 2002, e-mail to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) allegations coordinator. In your e-mail you expressed concern about the possibility of a terrorist attack on the Indian Point Nuclear Generating Unit Nos. 2 and 3 (IP2 and 3).

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 commercial nuclear power plants to implement interim compensatory security 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 Commission's ongoing security review.

We cannot rule out the possibility of future terrorist attacks on the IP units; however, 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 allow trained operators to prevent or limit the release of radioactive material in the unlikely event of a terrorist attack or other disaster. 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 immediate closure of IP2 and 3 to be necessary to provide adequate protection for the public health and safety.

I trust that this addresses your concerns. If you need further assistance, please contact the project manager for the IP units, Mr. Patrick Milano, at (301) 415-1457.

Sincerely,

/RA/

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

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Project Directorate I
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