

October 1, 2002

Thomas Falvey
521 6th Avenue #120
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Mr. Falvey:

I am responding on behalf of the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your letter dated September 5, 2002, concerning the security and safety of the nation's nuclear facilities. Specifically, you raised concerns about terrorists turning a nuclear power plant into a weapon of mass destruction.

After the terrorist events of September 11, 2001, the NRC issued numerous safeguards and threat advisories to its licensees to strengthen their capabilities and readiness to respond to a potential attack on their facilities. The advisories provided concise and relevant guidance relating to the need for each category of licensee to take specific actions to enhance security. Subsequently, on February 25, 2002, the NRC issued Orders to nuclear power reactor licensees that modified the operating licenses for each of these facilities to require compliance with specific interim compensatory measures. Some of the Orders' requirements formalize measures specified in the advisories, while other requirements provide additional security enhancements which have emerged from inspection details and staff experience. Some of the specific measures implemented by the licensees included increased patrols, augmented security forces and capabilities, additional security posts, installation of additional physical barriers, vehicle checks at greater stand-off distances, enhanced coordination with law enforcement and military authorities, and more restrictive site access controls for all personnel.

In addition, the NRC has begun a comprehensive re-evaluation of its safeguards and security programs, including its internal organization, regulatory structure, guidance, and requirements for security at licensed facilities. This re-evaluation will provide insights into additional security enhancements and may result in revisions to existing regulations.

Thank you for your letter and continued interest in the safety of our nation's nuclear facilities.

Sincerely,

/RA/ signed by Richard Wessman for

Roy P. Zimmerman, Director
Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response

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Sincerely,

Roy P. Zimmerman, Director
Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response

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