

December 10, 2002

The Honorable Fred Upton
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Upton:

I am responding on behalf of the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your letter of July 26, 2002, to Joe M. Allbaugh, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), concerning training for local government officials in Michigan to prepare them to respond to terrorist incidents at the nuclear power plants in that State. Although FEMA is responsible for emergency response outside each plant's protected area, the NRC is responsible for safety and security within the site boundaries. Mr. Allbaugh forwarded your letter to me on October 16, 2002, to allow me an opportunity to share some of the NRC's actions in the security arena.

In the aftermath of the terrorist events of September 11, 2001, the NRC has taken numerous actions to enhance the already strong security at the nuclear facilities throughout the Nation. These initiatives have included Orders to the major NRC licensees requiring additional security measures, establishment of an NRC Threat Advisory and Protective Measures System to provide a mechanism for rapidly communicating additional security measures in response to changes in the threat environment, and a comprehensive review of the NRC's security and safeguards programs. The security enhancements required in the Orders include measures to provide additional protection against vehicle bombs, as well as water and land-based assaults. They include requirements for increased security patrols, augmented security forces, additional security posts, increased vehicle standoff distances, tightened facility access controls, and enhanced coordination with the law enforcement and intelligence communities and other agencies.

The requirement to enhance coordination with law enforcement and intelligence communities is directly related to your specific concern. The NRC continues to work in cooperation with licensees, and Federal, State, and local governments to improve coordination and communications among these organizations. This interaction has promoted greater awareness and mutual understanding of the policies, activities, and concerns of all the involved parties. The NRC has also increased communications through its State Liaison Officer (SLO) program. The Governor of each State appoints an SLO to act as liaison to the NRC and we have used this channel to keep the Governors informed of nuclear regulatory and related public health and safety matters, and to receive the States' positions on particular issues.

In the NRC Threat Advisory and Protective Measures System, the NRC has indicated that State and local resources might be needed to supplement the licensees' response to an event. On June 28, 2002, prior to finalizing the system, the staff met with State and local government representatives to discuss the new system and its implications for local agencies, and to solicit feedback. Although no representatives from Michigan attended that meeting, some were active in later meetings to discuss issues associated with transportation security.

Honorable F. Upton

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Thank you for your interest in these matters and please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. We would also be happy to arrange a briefing for you or members of your staff.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Richard A. Meserve

cc: Joe M. Allbaugh, FEMA