

January 17, 2003

The Honorable Joe M. Allbaugh
Director
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Washington, D.C. 20472

Dear Mr. Allbaugh:

I am responding to your letter of November 15, 2002, in which you offered the opportunity to coordinate and synchronize the assessment requirements relating to emergency responsibilities placed upon the States.

In accordance with existing regulatory requirements, nuclear power reactor and fuel cycle licensees regulated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) exercise their offsite radiological emergency plans biennially. These exercises are conducted in concert with required biennial exercises of the onsite emergency preparedness plans.

The exercise schedules are coordinated among the licensees, NRC, FEMA and offsite agencies -- typically, years in advance -- and take into consideration plant operating and outage schedules, power demands, NRC inspection schedules and resources, as well as FEMA and offsite agencies' resources. In addition, the NRC coordinates with licensees and other Federal agencies to support security-related drills and exercises, which also may involve State participation.

We fully support the effort to coordinate the assessment requirements placed upon the States. I suggest this coordination be achieved through the existing NRC/FEMA Steering Committee on Emergency Preparedness as established by the NRC/FEMA Memorandum of Understanding of June 17, 1993.

Please contact me if this coordination is not adequate or if you have any further concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Richard A. Merserve

cc: B. Baughman, FEMA