

December 23, 2002

Mr. Jean-Paul Samain
Directeur Général de l'Agence Fédérale de Contrôle Nucléaire
Rue Ravenstein 36
B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Mr. Samain:

On December 9, 2002, you hosted the technical exchange between Belgian regulatory agencies and staff from the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. The main purpose of this technical exchange was to discuss the reconciliation between the RCC-M Code and Section III to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code conducted in Belgium to support the replacement of the Tihange, Unit 1 reactor vessel head. We undertook this activity to support the NRC's inspection of the replacement of the North Anna, Unit 2 reactor vessel head with a head manufactured to the French RCC-M Code.

As the leader of the NRC's team, I want to thank you for your efforts and the efforts of your staff at making this a successful exchange of information. Through your efforts we were able to achieve our objectives in meeting with the representatives of the Authorized Inspection Body (AIB-Vinçotte - AV) and the Authorized Inspection and Licensing Body (Association Vinçotte Nuclear - AVN). Please extend my thanks, and the thanks of my team, to Mr. Yvan Pouleur of your staff and other members of your staff that contributed to this effort, and Mssr. Charles Roubens, Guy Vast, and André De Kegel of AV, and Mr. Guy Roussel of AVN.

Based on our discussions, the NRC staff has a better understanding of the reconciliation conducted for the replacement of the Tihange, Unit 1 reactor vessel head. We especially appreciated the opportunity to see the summary of the reconciliation report during our meeting. As we mentioned during our meeting, we will continue to work towards obtaining the reconciliation report Electrabel had prepared for the head replacement at Tihange, Unit 1. The information we gained from our discussions while in Belgium will be of great use to the NRC as we proceed with our inspection activities related to the replacement of the North Anna, Unit 2 reactor vessel head.

Sincerely,

/RA/

John A. Nakoski, Chief, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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