

March 11, 2003

The Honorable Leonard T. Connors, Jr.
Senator - 9th District
9th District Legislative Offices
620 West Lacey Road
Forked River, NJ 08731

Dear Mr. Connors:

I am responding to your letter dated January 23, 2003, requesting the NRC to investigate and take appropriate action for a concern raised by one of your constituents regarding security at the Oyster Creek Generating Station. You also provided a copy of the letter from your constituent, dated January 14, 2003, that refers to prior correspondence from my office on the same topic.

We understand why you and your constituents are particularly interested in nuclear plant security. We share your concern and take very serious our responsibility in these matters. Security of nuclear power plants across the country, long the subject of NRC regulatory oversight, has been given even greater priority at NRC since the September 2001 terrorist attack. Within minutes of the attack, NRC directed plants across the country to go to the highest level of security. The NRC's licensees have remained at a heightened level of security since that time. While for many years, all nuclear power plants have been required to have security programs sufficient to defend against violent assaults by well-armed, well-trained attackers, numerous additional steps have been taken since September 2001 to thwart terrorist acts. Through formal Orders, NRC has required 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 personnel access controls. NRC has conducted a number of inspections and audits of the security program at Oyster Creek, as well as all nuclear power plants across the country, and has confirmed that the required security enhancements have been implemented. The NRC has verified that there is an appropriate number of security personnel at Oyster Creek.

Regarding your specific concern at Oyster Creek relative to the loading dock and warehouse area, we have reviewed this area to determine if any security-related vulnerability exists. The senior resident inspector toured this facility when your constituent's concern was initially raised, and security specialists observed this facility periodically to verify that necessary security features were being maintained. In part, your constituent was concerned that a vehicle could drive into this area without being physically checked by security personnel. This is true. However, extensive measures are in place to make sure that vehicle access to this location will not threaten the plant nearby. Additionally, as a result of the NRC's Orders since September 2001, the licensee at Oyster Creek has re-assessed the necessary stand-off distance for a vehicle bomb threat. The warehouse area meets this required stand-off distance, ensuring that any attack at this location would not result in damage to vital equipment. The warehouse itself

contains no vital equipment that could be exploited by such an attack. The warehouse area also has controls and barriers in place to prevent unauthorized vehicles from breaching the necessary stand-off distance or gaining access to the vital areas of the plant through this facility. Furthermore, intrusion detection and search capability exists at this location ensuring an appropriate response by the onsite security force and local law authorities, if warranted.

While we have concluded that vehicle access to the warehouse area at Oyster Creek meets the current security requirements, the NRC continues to evaluate our safeguards and security programs. If, as a result of this ongoing evaluation, the NRC determines additional security measures are necessary, then we will take the appropriate action.

The NRC continues to focus on its primary mission - public health and safety. Thank you for your interest in the safety and security of the Oyster Creek Generating Station.

Sincerely,

/RA by A. R. Blough Acting For/

Hubert J. Miller
Regional Administrator

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Letters identical in text were sent to Leonard T. Connors, Jr., Senator -9th District; Jeffrey W. Moran, Assemblyman - 9th District; and Christopher J. Connors, Assemblyman - 9th District.

*See prior concurrence

** Telephone concurrence on 03/11/03

March 11, 2003

The Honorable Jeffrey W. Moran
Assemblyman - 9th District
9th District Legislative Offices
620 West Lacey Road
Forked River, NJ 08731

Dear Mr. Moran:

I am responding to your letter dated January 23, 2003, requesting the NRC to investigate and take appropriate action for a concern raised by one of your constituents regarding security at the Oyster Creek Generating Station. You also provided a copy of the letter from your constituent, dated January 14, 2003, that refers to prior correspondence from my office on the same topic.

We understand why you and your constituents are particularly interested in nuclear plant security. We share your concern and take very seriously our responsibility in these matters. Security of nuclear power plants across the country, long the subject of NRC regulatory oversight, has been given even greater priority at NRC since the September 2001 terrorist attack. Within minutes of the attack, NRC directed plants across the country to go to the highest level of security. The NRC's licensees have remained at a heightened level of security since that time. While for many years, all nuclear power plants have been required to have security programs sufficient to defend against violent assaults by well-armed, well-trained attackers, numerous additional steps have been taken since September 2001 to thwart terrorist acts. Through formal Orders, NRC has required 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 personnel access controls. NRC has conducted a number of inspections and audits of the security program at Oyster Creek, as well as all nuclear power plants across the country, and has confirmed that the required security enhancements have been implemented. The NRC has verified that there is an appropriate number of security personnel at Oyster Creek.

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Sincerely,

/RA by A. R. Blough Acting For/

Hubert J. Miller
Regional Administrator

March 11, 2003

The Honorable Christopher J. Connors
Assemblyman - 9th District
9th District Legislative Offices
620 West Lacey Road
Forked River, NJ 08731

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Hubert J. Miller
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