

April 24, 2003

Mr. Paul M. Blanch
135 Hyde Road
West Hartford, CT 06117

SUBJECT: DAVIS-BESSE NUCLEAR POWER STATION, UNIT 1 - E-MAIL
CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING CONTROL ROD DRIVE MECHANISM
NOZZLE CORROSION

Dear Mr. Blanch:

Between August 22, 2002, and August 27, 2002, you forwarded a number of E-Mails to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regarding the events related to the inspection of the Davis-Besse control rod drive mechanism nozzles and the reactor vessel head. In particular, most of the information that you provided was related to internal NRC documentation and discussions that were underway as the NRC was evaluating the FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company response to NRC Bulletin 2001-01, Circumferential Cracking of Reactor Pressure Vessel Head Penetration Nozzles. The information that you provided generally focused on the staff concerns with Davis-Besse and other plants that had indicated that they were not planning to shut down by December 31, 2001, to do the recommended inspections.

Since receipt of your E-Mails, several public documents have been issued which relate to the NRC staff's management of the schedule for shutdown of Davis-Besse and subsequent inspections. Of particular note are the following:

NRC's Regulation of Davis-Besse Regarding Damage to the Reactor Vessel Head, Office of Inspector General Event Inquiry, December 30, 2002;

Comments in Defense of the Risk-Informed Decision Making Process and on the OIG Event Inquiry, "NRC's Regulation of Davis Besse Regarding Damage to the Reactor Vessel Head," memorandum from Gary M. Holahan to the NRC Commissioners and the Executive Director for Operations, January 14, 2003; and

Clarification of the Extent of My Dissent with the Agency's Decision Not to Order the Davis-Besse Plant to Shut Down for Inspection by December 31, 2001, and the Explanation of the Basis for My Disagreement, memorandum from Steven M. Long to the NRC Commissioners, February 20, 2003.

The above referenced documents, which are available on the NRC Home Page (www.nrc.gov) address, to varying degrees, the NRC's internal discussions and the processes that were used to determine that Davis-Besse could operate until February 16, 2002. I believe that these documents encompass the subjects included in your E-Mails. Other documents related to the same subject are available through the same web page.

Your E-Mails also included several technical comments (e.g., clogging of sump screens). Specific technical issues related to plant restart are being addressed through the Manual Chapter 0350 process and the NRC Region III inspection program. The results of the 0350 panel meetings and our inspections are made available on the NRC web page.

I trust that the above documents provide an adequate framework for an understanding of the issues contained in your E-Mails. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Anthony Mendiola of my staff at 301-415-2466.

Sincerely,

/RA/

John A. Zwolinski, Director
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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