



In making its decision, the Commission has focused on the option that would best further the health and safety mission of this agency. In particular, we assessed the most effective way to increase the level of training for our 2,800 member workforce. Our decision was not governed by cost considerations. In fact, as part of the effort to analyze this issue, the Commission determined that over a ten-year period there would be neither significant increased costs nor significant savings in moving the TTC.

The Commission's decision reflects our recognition that our headquarters staff in Rockville needs greater access to the reactor technology training resources currently in Chattanooga. As you know, this is a period of tremendous change for the NRC. Not only is the NRC embarked on extensive regulatory reforms, but also the nuclear power industry is changing to meet the challenges resulting from the deregulation of the electric industry. The Commission believes that, in order to meet the agency's many regulatory challenges, it is imperative that the agency establish a more robust technical training program in Rockville, where a majority of our workforce is located. In light of the fact that we have 1,900 members of our staff at our Rockville site, moving the TTC and its simulators to our headquarters will allow us to enhance our level of training for that group of staff who currently do not take full advantage of these facilities because of the travel involved.

The Commission also recognized that the rapidly changing regulatory environment and the emergence of new technologies will require our training staff to work more closely with NRC technical experts and to be more aware of current agency activities and perspectives in order to integrate these perspectives more easily into training courses. By having our technical training facility located in Rockville, with the resulting ability to utilize a wider range of technical experts as trainers, the quality of our training should be enhanced.

Finally, by placing the simulators in Rockville, we will have much greater access to these resources in the event of an accident at a plant. Quick access to these facilities by our lead technical experts could have a significant benefit in enabling the determination of the root cause of problems as well as allow us to formulate potential solutions.

We are mindful that the TTC has a 20-year history of successful operation in Chattanooga and that moving the facility will have some impact on the economy and will cause some disruption in the personal lives of TTC employees. These staff are a valuable agency resource that will continue to be needed in the future as the industry and the NRC proceed with license renewal and other regulatory initiatives. We have attempted to address these issues in fashioning an implementation plan that will minimize the impacts. TTC employees not directly associated with simulator support will be moved to the headquarters area by the end of FY 2001, while the simulators themselves and the remaining TTC personnel will remain in Chattanooga until at least mid FY 2003. Moreover, to ensure that the move does not impose any unnecessary personal burdens on the TTC staff, we have directed the NRC staff to take appropriate measures to meet the transitional needs of the TTC employees and their families.

Given the importance of this decision, I and the other members of the Commission would be pleased to meet with you regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard A. Meserve". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "M".

Richard A. Meserve