

September 24, 2003

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Lowey:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am writing in response to your letter of August 6, 2003, regarding the force-on-force exercises conducted at the Indian Point Energy Center in Buchanan, New York, from July 28 to August 1, 2003. Your letter also expressed concerns about the NRC's previous handling of issues related to emergency response security issues and concerns raised by Indian Point employees involved with security operations.

With respect to security at the Indian Point Energy Center, NRC's observations of the force-on-force exercise indicate that the licensee has a strong defensive strategy and capability. Indian Point security force personnel successfully protected the plant from repeated mock adversary attacks during the exercise. The mock adversary employed tactics and weapons during the exercise consistent with adversary characteristics that have been enhanced by NRC to reflect our review of the current threat environment following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Regarding the previous issues, as I described in my letter to you dated August 7, 2003, the NRC has actively worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, State and local officials, and the plant operator to enhance emergency preparedness. As we announced on July 25, 2003, on the basis of FEMA's finding and the current level of the licensee's onsite emergency planning and preparedness, the NRC remains assured that emergency preparedness for the site is adequate.

You requested a report containing Indian Point site-specific and programmatic information about the recent force-on-force exercise, much of which is Safeguards Information. If you wish, the staff will provide a Safeguards-level briefing to answer your questions relating to the force-on-force pilot program and Indian Point pilot program exercise, emergency preparedness, and security force employees' concerns. This exercise was conducted as part of a pilot program for which a composite report to the Commission will be submitted.

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NRC will continue to provide close oversight of plant activities, including implementation of enhanced security measures and emergency preparedness. I appreciate your continued interest in the safety and security of Indian Point. If you desire a briefing on the Indian Point force-on-force exercise, please have your staff contact Mr. Dennis Rathbun (301-415-1776), Director of NRC's Office of Congressional Affairs.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Nils J. Diaz