

August 29, 2003

Mr. David A. Lochbaum
Union of Concerned Scientists
1707 H Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006-3919

Dear Mr. Lochbaum:

I am responding to your letter to Samuel J. Collins, dated August 4, 2003. In that letter, you pointed to apparent inconsistencies between a document in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), dated July 17, 2003 (which is our response to your earlier letter dated July 1, 2003, in which you expressed concerns regarding NRC Bulletin 2003-01, "Potential Impact of Debris Blockage on Emergency Sump Recirculation at Pressurized-Water Reactors") and statements made in NRC Bulletin 2003-01. You also indicated that you had not received our response via the mail.

Upon receipt of your letter of August 4, 2003, we discovered that an administrative error during our dispatching process resulted in our failure to mail our response to you. We have since mailed our July 17 response to you and faxed it to your Washington office. In addition, to prevent the recurrence of similar errors, we are reviewing our dispatching process for external correspondence and will make changes as appropriate.

As we stated in the July 17 response, the interim measures suggested in Bulletin 2003-01 were not a reflexive or unconsidered reaction to the discoveries at Davis-Besse. By that we meant that while Davis-Besse contributed to our sense of urgency, it did not, by itself, form the basis for our decision to issue Bulletin 2003-01. Moreover, it did not cause us to take action not properly considered by us or to suggest that licensees implement measures that they had not properly analyzed for their safety impact. In fact, it is a matter of record that the NRC staff had already planned, as part of a draft generic letter, to request that licensees take interim actions to address sump recirculation performance issues. Therefore, we do not believe there is any conflict between the statements made in our July 17 letter and the bulletin.

Please let me know if you have any additional concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

R. William Borchardt, *//RAI//* Acting Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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R. William Borchardt, **//RA//** Acting Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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