

December 05, 2003

Rules Docket Clerk
Office of the General Counsel
Federal Emergency Management Agency/DHS
Room 840
500 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20472

SUBJECT: PLANNING AND PREPARING FOR A FAST-BREAKING EVENT

Dear Sir/Madam:

As requested in a *Federal Register* notice (FRN) published on August 19, 2003, (68 FR 49783), we are submitting the enclosed comments on the proposed means to evaluate the capability of offsite response organizations (OROs) to respond to a fast-breaking radiological event at a commercial nuclear power plant. Specifically, the FRN addressed the planning of the response to a fast-breaking event, demonstration of the capability (drills/exercises), the frequency of the evaluation, and the evaluation criteria.

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is supportive of FEMA's efforts to improve oversight of ORO fast breaker notification capability. This is an important facet of emergency preparedness and continuous federal oversight is appropriate in the current threat environment. NRC will support FEMA's efforts to modify evaluation criteria, as needed. However, NRC has identified some areas of the evaluation criteria that may have unintended consequences and has provided comments intended to improve FEMA's oversight in the enclosure to this letter.

If you would like to discuss these comments further, or need clarification, please contact Mr. Randy L. Sullivan of my staff at 301-415-1123.

Sincerely,

/RA/ Signed by J. Dyer

J. E. Dyer, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure: As stated

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J. E. Dyer, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure: As stated

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