

May 21, 2004

The Honorable Andrea F. Nuciforo
Massachusetts Senate
State House
Boston, MA 02133-1054

Dear Senator Nuciforo:

I am responding on behalf of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to your letter dated March 24, 2004, which was jointly endorsed by Representatives Stephen Kulik, Christopher Donelan, and Shaun Kelly, as well as Senator Stan Rosenberg. In this letter, you expressed your collective concerns for the power uprate request at the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station, and requested that the NRC conduct an independent engineering assessment of the facility, as also recently called for by the Vermont Public Service Board. You requested that this assessment be done prior to the NRC approval of any power uprate at Vermont Yankee.

The NRC sent a letter to the Vermont Public Service Board on May 4, 2004, in response to their request for an independent engineering assessment. To address your concerns, I am enclosing a copy of that letter for your information, which describes our plans to use an improved engineering inspection at Vermont Yankee. The NRC staff has concluded that the detailed technical review, combined with inspections prescribed by the reactor oversight process, as enhanced by a new engineering inspection, is the most effective method of determining whether Vermont Yankee could safely operate under uprated power conditions.

I believe the enclosed information, which describes our review and inspection procedure, along with our plans for a new engineering inspection, will assist in addressing your concerns regarding the power uprate of Vermont Yankee. Additional information about the on-going review process is also available on our NRC website at:

www.nrc.gov/reactors/plant-specific-items/vermont-yankee-issues.html

Thank you for your interest and concern in NRC activities.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Cornelius F. Holden, Director
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure: Letter to the Vermont Public Service Board

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