

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

Date Printed: Aug 05, 2004 16:02

PAPER NUMBER: LTR-04-0503
ACTION OFFICE: EDO

LOGGING DATE: 08/05/2004

To: Dyer, NRR

AUTHOR: F. Bowman
AFFILIATION: DOE
ADDRESSEE: Nils Diaz
SUBJECT: First sea trials of PCU Virginia (SSN 774)

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ACTION: Appropriate
DISTRIBUTION: RF

LETTER DATE: 07/30/2004

ACKNOWLEDGED No

SPECIAL HANDLING:

NOTES: OCM #5641

FILE LOCATION: ADAMS

DATE DUE:

DATE SIGNED:

Template: SECY-017

ERIDS: SECY-01



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Department of Energy
National Nuclear Security Administration
Washington, DC 20585

July 30, 2004

The Honorable Nils Diaz
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Diaz:

The first sea trials of PCU VIRGINIA (SSN 774) were conducted 27-30 July 2004. The ship steamed 560.2 miles, of which 283 were submerged. Full-speed runs were conducted, both on the surface and submerged. Operation of the nuclear propulsion plant and the training of the officers and crew were satisfactory. We now have 54 nuclear-powered attack submarines and 14 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines in the Fleet, plus 4 guided missile submarines undergoing conversion. VIRGINIA will join the Fleet after delivery to the Navy later this year.

VIRGINIA is the lead ship of the most technologically advanced class of submarines ever built. In this single platform, VIRGINIA combines a unique mix of stealth, endurance, agility, and firepower to perform vital national security missions, even in areas denied to other U.S. assets. Reflecting the *Operational Requirements Document* approved in September 1993, VIRGINIA is our Navy's *only* major combatant now ready for delivery that was designed with the post-Cold War security environment in mind. With a sufficient number of VIRGINIA-class submarines, we will continue to meet the Nation's needs to dominate any adversary both in the open ocean and in shallow water close to shore.

The NRC staff played an important role in reviewing the safety of the VIRGINIA-class design. Thank you for this significant contribution.

Sincerely,

F. L. Bowman
Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion



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