

November 10, 2004

Mr. Mark Jacobs
Indian Point Safe Energy Coalition
P.O. Box 134
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

Dear Mr. Jacobs,

Thank you for your letter which addressed spent nuclear fuel storage at Indian Point. I appreciate your interest in the safe and secure storage of spent nuclear fuel and the conceptual design information you provided regarding the Hardened Onsite Storage (HOSS) process. It is our understanding that Entergy Nuclear Northeast is proposing to use the Holtec HI-STORM 100 dry cask storage system at the Indian Point site under the general license provisions of 10 CFR Part 72. The Holtec HI-STORM 100 system has been approved by the NRC as meeting the safety and regulatory requirements of Subpart L to Part 72. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has undertaken several studies to examine the potential vulnerabilities of spent nuclear fuel storage, in light of the current threat environment. Regarding the conceptual design and report you provided, the NRC does not endorse or promote any particular design over another, but rather ensures that licensees' security programs for spent fuel storage achieve the performance criteria set forth in Title 10 *Code of Federal Regulations*, Part 73 (10 CFR 73), and provides the required storage safeguards for spent fuel and protection against malevolent acts.

In conjunction with these studies, the NRC issued Orders to all independent spent fuel storage installations and other key nuclear facilities requiring implementation of enhanced security measures based on the threat environment. Although the details of specific security requirements are sensitive, they include such things as additional personnel access controls; enhanced requirements for guard forces; increased stand-off distances for searches of vehicles approaching nuclear facilities; and heightened coordination with appropriate local, State, and Federal authorities.

In parallel with these efforts, the NRC initiated vulnerability assessments for spent fuel storage in casks at independent spent fuel storage installations. The assessments specifically evaluate two different threat scenarios: a large aircraft impact similar in magnitude to the attacks on September 11, 2001, and ground assaults using expanded adversary characteristics consistent with the DBT for radiological sabotage. Because several cask designs are currently in use, the assessment has been conducted for several casks including the Holtec HI-STORM 100 casks.

These evaluations include structural analyses of the aircraft impact into a single cask and the resulting cask-to-cask interactions. Thermal evaluations were performed to estimate the effect of the jet fuel fire on the casks. Those evaluations indicate that it is highly unlikely that a significant release of radioactivity would occur from an aircraft impact on a dry spent fuel storage cask.

Mr. M. Jacobs

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Thus, we conclude that nuclear power plant safety, security, and emergency planning programs continue to provide high assurance of adequate protection of the public health and safety and protection of the common defense and security.

Please contact either Mr. Francis Young (301) 415-6396 (FIY@nrc.gov) or Mr. Paul J. Kelley, Jr., (301) 415-6101 (PJK1@nrc.gov) of my staff if you have additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Roy P. Zimmerman, Director
Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response

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