

**From:** David Vito  
**To:** Lisamarie Jarriel  
**Date:** 8/23/04 9:03AM  
**Subject:** Request for your review/comment

~~- SENSITIVE ALLEGATION INFORMATION -  
- PROTECT ACCORDINGLY -~~

Lisa,

Attached is a draft closure letter for allegation RI-2004-A-0029. It related to the Salem/ Hope Creek SCWE review. Briefly, UCS filed formal "allegations" that: 1) Salem/HC was worse than Davis-Besse; and 2) that Salem/HC was below "industry standards" in the SCWE area.

Our proposed approach to closure is to simply restate the conclusions from our July 30, 2004, letter to PSEG, and also to indicate that we could not compare what we found at Salem/HC to Davis-Besse, or to the "industry." I would like to have attached SECY-04-0111 to this closure letter, since it has a lot of info in it about what the NRC is currently considering in the area of safety culture/SCWE. but since the SECY is still in draft, it can't be done. Please review the attached and provide your comments. I would like to get this out in the next couple of days. Your help is appreciated. Thanks

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

RI-2004-A-0029

Subject: Concerns You Raised to the NRC Regarding Salem and Hope Creek

Dear Mr. Lochbaum:

The NRC Region I office has completed its follow up in response to the remaining concerns of those you brought to our attention in your letter dated March 9, 2004 to Mr. H. Miller, the former NRC Region I Regional Administrator. Two of your concerns were responded to in a letter to you dated April 19, 2004. Enclosure 1 to this letter restates the remaining concerns and describes our review and conclusions.

Thank you for informing us of your concerns. We feel that our actions in this matter have been responsive. Should you have any additional questions, or if I can be of further assistance in this matter, please call me via the NRC Safety Hotline at 1-800-695-7403.

Sincerely,

David J. Vito  
Senior Allegation Coordinator

Enclosures:  
As Stated

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

## ENCLOSURE 1

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**Concern 3:**

You asserted that the safety culture at Salem/Hope Creek is worse than the safety culture at Davis-Besse and other nuclear facilities. You provided a table comparing the results of a safety culture survey performed at Davis-Besse in the spring of 2003 to comments derived from the results of the December 2003 Synergy survey at Salem/Hope Creek.

**Concern 4:**

You asserted that the safety culture at Salem/Hope Creek is inadequate by industry standards.

**Response to Concerns 3 & 4:**

As you are aware, in late 2003, the NRC initiated a special review at Salem and Hope Creek to assess the environment for raising and addressing safety issues. This review was undertaken consistent with NRC Staff Requirements Memorandum (SRM) resulting from SECY-98-176, "Proposed Options for Assessing a Licensee's Safety Conscious Work Environment," which directed NRC staff to assess the work environment at licensee facilities on a case-by-case basis.

The NRC undertook this special review at Salem and Hope Creek in light of information received in various allegations and NRC inspections over the past few years, as well as our annual and mid-cycle performance reviews in 2003 which identified a substantive cross-cutting issue in the area of problem resolution and identification area. Interim results were described in a letter to PSEG dated January 28, 2004. Final results were provided in a letter to PSEG dated July 30, 2004, a copy of which is attached to this letter.

Our review did not identify any serious safety violations. Nonetheless, we found numerous indications of weaknesses in corrective actions and management efforts to establish an environment where employees are consistently willing to raise safety concerns. Weaknesses in leadership and management approaches have led to a perception among some site staff and managers that the company has emphasized production to the point that negatively impacts the handling of emergent equipment issues and associated operational decision making. Management has not been consistent in its support of site staff identifying concerns and providing alternate views. We found examples of unresolved conflict and poor communication between management and staff, as well as underlying staff and management frustration with poor equipment reliability. The equipment issues stemmed, in part, from weaknesses in implementation of Station processes, such as work management and corrective action.

While we acknowledge your opinion that the safety culture at Salem/Hope Creek compares unfavorably to the safety culture at Davis-Besse and to industry standards, we feel an effort on the part of the NRC to compare Salem/Hope Creek's safety culture to that of another facility or to an industry "standard" would be entirely subjective and not relevant to our current and future actions with regard to the safety conscious work environment at Artificial Island. We feel that our letter of July 30, 2004, to PSEG accurately describes the findings of our special review and highlights the corrective actions committed to by PSEG. The NRC plans to continue to closely

## ENCLOSURE 1

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monitor PSEG performance and efforts to improve the work environment at Salem/Hope Creek. Specific plans for inspections and related oversight activities will be provided in the Reactor Oversight Program Mid-Cycle Assessment letter, which we expect to issue in the next few weeks.

As you are aware, there is no NRC regulation in the area of safety culture. While NRC policy documentation has been authored with regard to the agency's expectations related to safety culture and safety conscious work environment, and rulemaking has been proposed, the Commission has not recommended that a rule be pursued. Subjectivity has been the NRC's principal objection to the direct regulation of safety culture. Notwithstanding, the NRC continues to explore ways to more effectively monitor safety culture/SCWE so that it can be better assessed as a potential "cross cutting issue" within the Reactor Oversight Process. The NRC is currently evaluating the possibility of establishing guidance documentation which would highlight attributes of a Safety Conscious Work Environment, and establishing instructions to enable the NRC staff to perform a systematic assessment of safety culture/SCWE should concerns arise. Recent activity in this area is highlighted at the following web address:

<http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/allegations/scwe-mainpage.html>

Mr. Dave Lochbaum

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