

From: Neil Sheehan *RS*
 To: Donna Skay *MS*
 Date: Tue, Mar 23, 2004 2:23 PM
 Subject: Re: draft Communication Plan and Qs and As

Donna,

Yes, Region I OPA could set up meetings with newspaper editorial boards. Essentially, we would contact an editorial board and let them know we were going to be in the area for a meeting or other reason. We would request a meeting with them to provide information about our reviews and broaden their understanding of the subject. Since these are small newspapers, the editorial boards would probably be small. A hour or so would probably be all they would need or want. The editorial board could then use (or not use) that information as it wrote future editorials on the topic. In other words, there's no guarantee it would lead to them developing a better grasp of the topic but it certainly is worth a try, and it has worked in the past.

As for op-ed pieces, small papers like those in Vermont will run almost all of them that they receive. I really believe that the answer I cited in the Q&As could be a good starting point for an op-ed that we could submit. Given the sensitivity of the uprate in Vermont, I would suggest we do one sooner rather than later.

Neil

✓>>> Donna Skay 03/23/04 12:56PM >>> *MS*

Neil,
 Thank you for your comments.

I like your suggestions regarding visits to newspaper editorial boards. I'm not familiar with how we would interact with them. Would an activity like this be performed through Region I OPA? Do we typically go out to the newspapers with information that was not requested by them? I think you are right that the local newspapers carry a lot of weight and so far, they have only received the opinions of those who are critical of the NRC.

✓>>> Neil Sheehan 03/23/04 12:01PM >>> *RS*

Don Florek shared this with Region I OPA and asked for our comments. Overall, I'd say it's a very good effort and will be a valuable tool going forward. Your efforts are appreciated.

I have a few comments:

- * Under the "Background" section, I'd add one generic issue to those that may raise questions or concerns from the public: the recent change in the way we handle public hearing requests (i.e., less likelihood of an actual hearing). This has already come up in other locations, including Millstone, so it would not be surprising if it also surfaces in Vermont.

- * Also under the "Background" section, paragraph 3, I would be cautious about saying the ISA conducted at Maine Yankee eventually led to its shutdown. My recollection is that it played a large role, but that, publicly at least, the utility announced that it was basing its decision to shut down the plant early on economic considerations (as was also the case at Haddam Neck and Millstone 1).

- * Under the "Audience" section, I'd add several media outlets: the Associated Press, the Burlington (Vt.) Free Press, the Valley Advocate, and assorted TV and radio stations.

- * Also under the "Audience" section, please also include me (the other Region I Public Affairs Officer) as an "Internal Stakeholder" in the Office of Public Affairs.

- * Under the "Key Messages" section, third bulleted item: Have we definitely decided we won't perform additional reviews or inspections? I thought the question of an independent assessment was still open, especially in light of recent requests from Vermont, no?

- * Under the "Communication Tools" section, we note that the power uprate application is posted on the NRC's external web site. Given the high level of attention this review is attracting, might it not be worthwhile to set up a separate page that contain not only the application but also all other relevant documents, including correspondence between us and the utility, and correspondence between us and

D-10

lawmakers? Another communication tool worth considering might be a periodic newsletter to keep the public apprised of developments pertaining to the review, a la the Davis-Besse outage update newsletter.

* Also under the "Communication Tools" section, we might want to add visits to newspaper editorial boards to the item on "Press Releases and Media Interviews." The two daily newspapers that cover VY religiously, the Brattleboro Reformer and Rutland Herald, are small in circulation but carry a lot of weight in the community.

* In the "Questions and Answers" attachment, in the answer to Question 4, it might be worth noting that Vermont's nuclear safety inspector at the plant has also stated publicly that he does not believe an independent assessment is warranted at VY.

* Also in the "Questions and Answers" attachment, in the answer to Question 6, this is very useful information. So much so that it might be worthwhile to use it as the basis for an op-ed piece that we could offer to area newspapers. This kind of information has not been making it out to the public, and it should be.

Thanks,
Neil
Region I Public Affairs

<>>> Donna Skay 03/22/04 10:45AM >>>

NAA

Attached are the draft Comm Plan and Qs and As. These will be used to guide our communications with stakeholders that have concerns with the VY power uprate. In particular, the Qs and As will be used as the basis for our responses to questions that may be asked at the public meeting on March 31. Therefore, it is important that everyone agree with the established answers.

The attached documents are my first shot at compiling what I think might be the important issues. I would like everyone to add any additional questions or recommend changes to the answers as appropriate.

We would like to have the Comm Plan issued formally by the end of this week (March 26).

I will send it through for formal concurrence but wanted to give everyone a chance to comment on the draft first.