



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 16, 2005

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States House of
Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Van Hollen:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your November 4, 2005, letter to Mr. Dennis Rathbun. You forwarded correspondence from your constituent, Mr. Jonathan Jones, who voiced concerns about the effectiveness of security at the Nation's research and test reactors in light of the ABC "Prime Time" story that aired on October 13, 2005. Mr. Jones also raised his concerns directly with NRC on October 14, 2005, through an e-mail message. We replied promptly to Mr. Jones' e-mail initially on October 14, 2005, and provided additional information to him on October 18, 2005.

NRC security requirements applicable to research and test reactors are prescribed in 10 CFR Part 73 and have been in place at each facility since they were initially licensed to operate. Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, a variety of supplemental security measures were instituted at these facilities to enhance their protection against potential sabotage events. We also initiated comprehensive security assessments at each research and test reactor to determine whether any additional security measures are warranted. These latter efforts are nearing completion.

In addition, shortly before the ABC story was televised, we requested each research and test reactor licensee to provide us with specific additional information on the range of security measures at their sites. The purpose of this request was to enable us to re-verify that necessary and effective security measures remain in place given the current domestic threat environment. We are reviewing the responses to our information request now. If as a result of our ongoing oversight activities any additional security measures are deemed necessary to ensure the continued health and safety of the public, we will not hesitate to act.

Thank you for bringing this information to our attention. NRC considers public involvement in our activities to be a cornerstone of strong, fair regulation of the nuclear industry. We appreciate and share your interest in ensuring the continuing safety and security at NRC-licensed facilities. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director
for Operations

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Luis A. Reyes
Executive Director
for Operations

Enclosure: As stated

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