



# NRC NEWS

**U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

Office of Public Affairs Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: [opa@nrc.gov](mailto:opa@nrc.gov)

Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

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## **Statement of NRC Chairman Dale E. Klein at Peach Bottom Nuclear Power Plant in Pennsylvania**

**February 8, 2008**

I was at Three Mile Island yesterday discussing the need to be vigilant not just with management, but also with a group of reactor operators and security personnel. You all know about the attention the Peach Bottom plant has received. Senator Carper and I are here to see for ourselves what the current situation is.

We just finished a tour of the plant, and talked with Exelon managers about the security issue involving inattentive security officers.

Let me say up front that I am not going to make excuses for what happened here. The NRC missed it. The plant missed it. From the NRC perspective, this is an example of how you can follow all the right steps and obey all the appropriate procedures, and still not reach the right outcome.

Clearly, the NRC needs to review the whole process of how we do these inspections. We are in fact doing that, and I will say more about this in a moment.

In March of 2007, when the NRC first received the allegation, we responded in what we thought was an appropriate way.

I should mention here—just to give you some perspective—that our agency gets between 500 and 600 allegations every year, and only about 1 in 10 is serious enough to warrant an enforcement action of some kind against a plant.

We investigated the initial allegation at Peach Bottom, but neither we nor the plant managers found evidence of the problem alleged.

In September, additional information was provided by the press.

At this point we performed a follow-up inspection and increased inspection activity at security posts at all nuclear power plants.

Let me emphasize that during this whole time we were confident—and we remain confident—that the overall security of the plant was adequate.

Nuclear power plants have redundant and overlapping security measures... and the security program at Peach Bottom operated to ensure that the health and safety of the public was adequately protected at all times.

Nevertheless, parts of the NRC's oversight and inspection process did not work the way we expected, so we are fixing that.

NRC staff are finalizing an internal assessment that will highlight some lessons we learned from all this.

This report contains several recommendations to improve the allegation, inspection, and investigation process. We are reviewing those recommendations now.

The areas we are looking at affect how we deal with allegations that come to us, how we work with the individual who raises the issue, and how we work with a plant and evaluate the plant's response.

We're also looking at how we can improve the NRC inspection regime to detect inattentiveness, and make certain our on-scene resident inspectors are kept aware of allegations that a regional office may be checking out.

We are committed to doing everything we can to fulfill our responsibilities to the American people for ensuring the safety and security of nuclear facilities and materials.