

March 19, 2009

Dr. Mario V. Bonaca, Chairman
Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS LETTER, DATED FEBRUARY 18, 2009, ON "SECY-08-0917, REVIEW OF OPTIONS TO REVISE RADIATION PROTECTION REGULATIONS AND GUIDANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE 2007 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION"

Dear Dr. Bonaca:

I am responding to your letter dated February 18, 2009, which provided the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) views on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) staff's Options Paper to revise radiation protection regulations and guidance with respect to the 2007 recommendations of the International Commission of Radiological Protection (ICRP). We are pleased that the ACRS endorses the NRC staff's preferred option 3 and the staff position that the current NRC regulatory framework continues to provide adequate protection of the health and safety of workers, the public, and the environment. The staff previously presented that position and observation to the Commission on December 18, 2008, in SECY-08-0197.

We also thank you for your recommendations concerning the development of separate radiation protection regulations for plant and animal species. We agree that, at this time, the NRC should not develop separate radiation protection regulations for plant and animal species. We plan to continue to stay actively engaged with the States (both Agreement and Non-Agreement), our Federal partners, and the international community in our effort to keep abreast of regulatory and scientific refinements in radiation protection.

We look forward to continuing to work with the ACRS as the NRC continues to evaluate whether to update radiation protection regulations and/or guidance with respect to the 2007 ICRP recommendations.

Sincerely,

/RA Martin Virgilio for/

R. W. Borchardt
Executive Director
for Operations

cc: Chairman Klein
Commissioner Jaczko
Commissioner Lyons
Commissioner Svinicki
SECY

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