U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Region II
Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building
26 Federal Plaza, Room 1311
New York, NY 10278-0002

FEMA

May 11, 2009

Mr. John R. Gibb
Director
New York State Emergency Management Office
1220 Washington Avenue, Bldg #22
Albany, NY 12226

SUBJECT: R. E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant Full Scale Exercise of May 5, 2009 – Identification of Issue Requiring Timely Correction

Dear Mr. Gibb:

At last week's full-scale, federally-evaluated radiological emergency response exercise for the R.E. Ginna Nuclear Power Plant an issue was identified that requires a timely redemonstration in order to determine that there is reasonable assurance that the public health and safety can and would be protected in the event of an emergency at the site. During the play of the exercise, the first Emergency Alert System (EAS) message with instructions to the public following a siren sounding did not get disseminated in a timely manner as the radio station that would broadcast the message was moving locations.

The first message was, per coordination and agreement among the 2 counties (Wayne and Monroe), the State Emergency Operation Center and the Joint Information Center (JIC) to be broadcasted by the EAS radio station, WHAM, at 10:15 a.m., following a siren sounding at 10:11 a.m. However, on exercise day communication telephone line problems occurred due to the radio station's location move. This resulted in an unsuccessful message relay to the radio station for almost thirty minutes after the sirens had been sounded.

While the message in question did not contain specific protective action recommendations for the public, and instead recommended monitoring the EAS station for additional information should protective actions become necessary, the delay may have confused the public possibly causing some people to have taken unnecessary actions that may have caused themselves or others harm.

As the radio station has fully moved to its new location, we are requesting that a remedial demonstration be planned and scheduled to occur as soon as possible (no longer than 120 days from the date of the exercise, and preferably sooner). In the remedial drill, the complete process of developing the message among the 2 counties, the State Emergency Operation Center and the Joint Information Center should be replicated. A message (or messages) should be relayed to the EAS station for broadcast in a timely manner, which is about 3-4 minutes after the sirens have sounded. Please develop a proposed scenario

and extent-of-play for the remedial drill, along with a suggested date for the demonstration and get back to us within 20 days of receipt of this letter.

If there are any questions concerning this matter, the FEMA Region II Technological Hazards Branch Chief and RAC Chair, Rebecca Thomson, can be reached at 212-680-8509.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Moriarty

Michael F. Moriarty
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Andrew X. Feeney, First Deputy Director, NY SEMO
Vanessa E. Quinn, REP Program Branch Chief, FEMA HQ