

October 5, 2010

Ms. Rochelle Becker, Executive Director
Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility
P.O. Box 1328
San Luis Obispo, California 93406

Dear Ms. Becker:

Thank you for your e-mail dated September 10, 2010, forwarding a letter on behalf of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility about the Seismic Information Workshop held September 8-9, 2010, in San Luis Obispo, California. The objective of the workshop was to provide a forum for members of the public to gain a basic knowledge of seismic hazard analysis and its application for the safe operation of commercial nuclear plants, in particular the Diablo Canyon Power Plant, Units 1 and 2 (DCPP).

We appreciate your feedback regarding the workshop and longstanding interest in matters related to seismic hazard at the DCPP site. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) certainly recognizes the importance of working collaboratively with others to ensure the scientific validity of analyses undertaken on a range of topics, including seismic hazard. We have a well-established record of coordination with California agencies on numerous issues associated with DCPP and plan to continue to pursue that approach. The State and the NRC will, of course, each have certain specific statutory and regulatory obligations and limitations. For example, the NRC must retain the ability to perform the independent reviews necessary to fulfill its legal obligations. Recognizing these limitations, if the California Energy Commission wishes to propose a specific collaborative process to review the seismic studies, NRC staff would be happy to evaluate the proposal. The NRC looks forward to better understanding the roles and responsibilities envisioned for such a panel and how the collaborative process would function in accordance with our legal obligations.

The issue of license renewal is a matter that the Commission may have to review in its adjudicatory capacity; therefore, I cannot comment on or discuss your specific concerns about the consideration of seismic issues in the NRC's license renewal process. The NRC maintains highly skilled resident inspectors at DCPP who monitor and inspect the operation of the facility on a daily basis. As such, the NRC staff is able to respond to new information quickly, as the agency demonstrated when it monitored Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E's) response to the discovery of the Shoreline Fault. Should information at any time cause the NRC to question the continued safe operation of DCPP, the agency will take appropriate action.

We agree that future public meetings would be beneficial for discussing new seismic information as it becomes available. The NRC expects to hold public meetings once PG&E completes its final report on the Shoreline Fault at the end of this year. We would expect to discuss the NRC's independent review and conclusions about those studies in early January 2011. The NRC will make these documents publicly available to you and other members of the public before such meetings.

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I appreciate your time and interest in this matter and assure you that the NRC is working to meet its statutory and regulatory obligations in a manner that serves public health and safety and protects the environment. If you have any questions, please contact me at 301-415-1750 or Mr. Michael Markley at 301-415-5723 or Michael.Markley@NRC.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Gregory B. Jaczko