



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I**
2100 RENAISSANCE BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406-2713

May 23, 2012

Mr. Albert H. Knowles, Jr.
Chairman, Board of Selectmen
Town of West Newbury
1910 Town Office Building
381 Main Street
West Newbury, MA 01985

Dear Mr. Knowles:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to the letter from the West Newbury Board of Selectmen, dated April 5, 2012. Specifically, as Chairman of the Board, you expressed concerns regarding the concrete degradation noted at Seabrook Station due to an Alkali-Silica Reaction (ASR), and urged the agency to take steps to fully address the matter to ensure the safety of the public in the future. You also expressed the desire for the NRC to publically address these issues and make documents publically available.

Be assured that the NRC is thoroughly evaluating this technical issue. We've been conducting inspections and technical reviews over the past year to evaluate and assess this issue and the NRC has concluded that, despite the observed degradation, these structures can perform their safety related functions.

The NRC has conducted a number of public meetings on the ASR issue. On April 23, 2012, the NRC held a public meeting with NextEra at our NRC headquarters office in Rockville, MD. The NRC posed a number of questions regarding the condition of the concrete, continued operability of the affected structures, NextEra's monitoring/managing plans, and their schedule for submittal of a corrective action plan. On May 16, 2012, the NRC issued NextEra a Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL), which is attached, that formally documents the commitments that the licensee has made to the NRC. The CAL will remain in effect until the NRC has concluded that all actions listed in the CAL have been satisfactorily completed.

On April 26, 2012, the NRC held a public meeting and open house regarding our annual performance assessment of the Seabrook Station. During that meeting we answered a number of questions related to this and many other topics of interest. Finally, the NRC intends to hold an additional public meeting at a location near Seabrook Station that will inform stakeholders of issues specifically surrounding the concrete degradation issue. The date for that meeting will be determined after the staff has had an opportunity to fully evaluate the information described above. The NRC will issue a public meeting notice when that meeting has been scheduled.

During these forums, the NRC communicated that it will continue to review this issue and that the license renewal schedule has and will continue to be impacted because no decision can be made until the extent of the longer-term implications of the concrete degradation are fully understood.

We believe the above addresses your suggested steps Nos. 1, 2, and 4. With respect to item 3, the NRC continually reviews the licensee's audit and inspection policies and procedures as a part of our Reactor Oversight Process. I have enclosed our March 26, 2012, inspection report which provides information related to some recent ASR-related inspection activities. Also, a major component of the NRC's license renewal process is to assess the aging management programs put in place by the licensee to assure the adequacy of its infrastructure.

The NRC shares your views that nuclear regulation is the public's business and, as such, we believe it should be transacted as openly and candidly as possible to maintain and enhance the public's confidence. As stated above, we've conducted a number of public forums regarding this subject and all NRC inspections reports, correspondence, reviews and assessments are made publically available in our Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) that can be accessed via our public website at <http://www.nrc.gov>.

Thank you for your interest in this matter. The agency certainly shares your concern with ensuring the safety of the Seabrook Station and we will be carefully evaluating the concrete degradation concerns and keeping the public and governmental officials informed. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Nancy McNamara, Regional State Liaison Officer at (610) 337-5337.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William M. Dean
Regional Administrator

Enclosures:
As stated

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/RA/

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