

March 14, 2013

Mr. Mike Ryan, Spokesman
Clean Nebraska
11130 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68154-3334

Dear Mr. Ryan:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am acknowledging your letter dated February 4, 2013, to NRC Chairman Allison Macfarlane. You requested that the NRC perform a rigorous and proactive NRC investigation with a broad view at the Fort Calhoun Station nuclear power plant (FCS).

As with all nuclear facilities under the agency's jurisdiction, the NRC conducts a continuous performance assessment of FCS. In April 2011, FCS was shut down for a scheduled refueling outage. Subsequently, from June to September 2011, FCS was affected by flooding from the Missouri river. During this extended period of shutdown, the NRC identified several longstanding technical issues at FCS as well as issues stemming from flooding. As a result, effective December 13, 2011, the NRC increased its regulatory oversight of FCS. The NRC is now following Inspection Manual Chapter 0350, "Oversight of Reactor Facilities in a Shutdown Condition Due to Significant Performance and/or Operational Concerns," when regulating FCS.

The Inspection Manual Chapter 0350 process is a rigorous one that will ensure that before the NRC allows the FCS to restart, the licensee must address the significant performance issues. As part of this process, the NRC has conducted and will continue to conduct large, in-depth independent team inspections prior to any restart decision. You noted certain deficiencies at FCS in your letter, including the following: (1) nonconforming containment internal structures, (2) lack of adequate design-basis documentation, (3) inadequate anchor embedment, and (4) electrical switchgear design vulnerability. The NRC is currently addressing these issues, and other issues, through its rigorous, independent inspection process. Where appropriate, the NRC adds inspection issues to the Confirmatory Action Letter documenting the actions that FCS must take prior to restart. The most recent version of the Confirmatory Action Letter for FCS was issued on February 26, 2013 (available at Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML13057A287).

In your letter you assert that the NRC may not currently be performing a rigorous proactive NRC investigation at FCS. The agency has referred your concerns to the NRC Office of the Inspector General.

M. Ryan

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The NRC appreciates hearing your views and thanks you for your concerns regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Eric J. Leeds, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

M. Ryan

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The NRC appreciates hearing your views and thanks you for your interest in this matter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Eric J. Leeds, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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