

March 15, 2013

Mr. Tim Shaw, Councilmember
City of La Habra
201 E. La Habra Boulevard
P.O. Box 337
La Habra, CA 90633-0337

Dear Mr. Shaw:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am providing agency comments on your letter to Senator Feinstein dated January 30, 2013, expressing support for a fair and balanced regulatory process that results in the restart and operation of the Southern California Edison (SCE) San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), Unit 2. In addition, your letter expresses concern about economic impacts if SONGS remains offline for an extended period of time.

As you know, SONGS, Units 2 and 3, are currently shut down to investigate the causes of excessive steam generator tube wear on the replacement steam generators. The NRC staff has been closely following the licensee's actions to evaluate the causes of the excessive tube wear and to develop corrective actions to prevent further tube degradation. The NRC's actions include initiating an augmented inspection on March 15, 2012; issuing a Confirmatory Action Letter to SCE on March 27, 2012, identifying the specific actions the licensee has committed to take prior to returning the units to power operation; and completing a follow-up inspection on September 28, 2012, to address unresolved items from the March 2012, inspection.

On October 3, 2012, the licensee provided its response to the Confirmatory Action Letter for Unit 2, which included an assessment of the causes of the steam generator tube degradation and a proposed plan for restart of Unit 2. The NRC has a public website dedicated to the oversight of SONGS where both the Confirmatory Action Letter and the licensee's response can be accessed, as well as a summary of the issues and other relevant documents. The website can be found at <http://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/reactor/songs/tube-degradation.html>.

The NRC will continue its independent, in-depth inspections and detailed reviews of the issues at SONGS. The Commission appreciates your insights on the economic impacts if SONGS remains offline. Nonetheless, the NRC will not allow the plant to restart until we are satisfied that the licensee can operate the plant without undue risk to public health and safety. The NRC will take the time needed to determine the appropriate actions to ensure the safety of the public, and will communicate its determinations to the public regarding the restart of SONGS, Units 2 and 3.

The NRC welcomes input from members of the public, public interest groups, and State and local governments in its decision-making processes. Toward that end, the NRC has held several meetings with SCE and the public. All public meetings are announced on the NRC's Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/public-meetings/index.cfm>.

On behalf of the NRC, I want to thank you for your continued involvement in matters related to nuclear safety. You and your constituents' interest and feedback help us to fulfill our public health and safety mission in an open and transparent manner.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Allison M. Macfarlane

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Representative Darrell Issa