



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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**OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL**

March 28, 2013

Henry A. Waxman
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce

Sheldon Whitehouse
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight, Senate
Committee on Environment and Public Works

Edward J. Markey
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources

Benjamin L. Cardin
Co-Chair
Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change
Chairman
Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife, Senate
Committee on Environment and Public Works

Dear Senators and Representatives:

In response to your February 25, 2013, letter requesting specific information regarding the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) efforts to implement various climate change laws and regulations, I submit the following responses:

Congressional Request, Part 1: (1) Identify the existing requirements in legislation, regulation, executive order, and other directives that apply to the government entity you oversee, (2) assess whether it is meeting these requirements, and (3) if it is not fully meeting the requirements, make recommendations for improving its performance.

NRC has and continues to implement the requirements of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 and Executive Orders 13423 and 13514. These regulations require the agency to review its energy consumption practices, set greenhouse gas emission targets, and report on its progress in meeting those targets. NRC has responded to these requirements in various ways, including:

- Issuing to the Council on Environmental Quality and the Office of Management and Budget a climate change adaptation policy statement in 2011. In this policy statement, NRC states its commitment to having a safe and healthy working environment for its building occupants.
- Issuing to the Council on Environmental Quality and the Office of Management and Budget annual strategic sustainability performance plans in 2010, 2011, and 2012. These plans describe the agency's progress in meeting the greenhouse gas reduction goals set forth in Executive Order 13514.
- Participating in the Office of Management and Budget's scorecard process to evaluate the agency's performance in achieving energy, transportation, and environmental goals.
- Submitting to the Council on Environmental Quality a greenhouse gas accounting and inventory report in 2010, 2011, and 2012 that reports on the agency's progress in reducing the six different greenhouse gasses described in Executive Order 13514.

Based on the information provided by NRC, the agency is currently meeting or exceeding the goals established for Federal agencies in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 and Executive Orders 13423 and 13514. I do not have any recommendations for NRC to improve its performance in this area.

Congressional Request, Part 2: Assess (1) the authorities the government entity you oversee has to reduce emissions of heat-trapping pollution, (2) its authorities to make the nation more resilient to the effects of climate change, and (3) the most effective additional steps it could take to reduce emissions or strengthen resiliency.

NRC does not have the authority or control to reduce emissions of heat-trapping pollution beyond its own business operations. However, starting in 2008, the agency began to evaluate the effect of greenhouse gas emissions and its implications for global climate change in its site-specific environmental reviews for nuclear reactor license renewal applications. NRC's implementation of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 and Executive Orders 13423 and 13514 and its continued efforts to abide by the environmental laws in the States and local entities where agency buildings are located affords NRC opportunities to help make the Nation more resilient to the effects of climate change. Agency officials have stated that NRC plans to continue to abide by

Federal laws and regulations related to climate change and continues to assess its business operations to identify additional steps to reduce harmful emissions.

If you have further questions or comments about NRC's efforts to reduce the effects of climate change, or this response, please contact Stephen Dingbaum, Assistant Inspector General for Audits at 301-415-5915, or me at 301-415-5930.

Sincerely,

Hubert T. Bell */RA/*
Inspector General
Nuclear Regulatory Commission