



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

April 30, 2013

Mr. Gary Shaw  
9 Van Cortlandt Place  
Croton on Hudson, NY 10520

Dear Mr. Shaw:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter dated February 15, 2013, to Allison Macfarlane, Chairman of the NRC. Your letter requests that the NRC conduct an independent safety assessment (ISA) of the Indian Point nuclear power plant and that the NRC institute a policy of sound recording at NRC public meetings.

As you noted, the NRC has received previous requests to conduct an ISA at Indian Point similar to that conducted at Maine Yankee in 1996. In response to these requests, the NRC staff performed a thorough and detailed comparison of the inspections performed today under the Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) to those areas inspected during the Maine Yankee ISA. The comparison confirmed that the current ROP inspection procedures, coupled with NRC review standards, effectively examine all key aspects that were part of the Maine Yankee ISA. This means that the NRC staff is essentially performing the inspection elements of an ISA at each operating nuclear power plant in the country on a routine basis.

In addition, a specific request to conduct an ISA at Indian Point was made by then Governor Eliot Spitzer in 2007. The outcome of the review to address then Governor Spitzer's request concluded that the ROP inspections provide better oversight of site operations than an ISA. This document is available electronically in the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access Management System (ADAMS) under accession number ML071290396. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC website at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. We consider that the ROP provides better oversight than an ISA because the ROP provides continual oversight, whereas an ISA is a one-time review of plant issues. Therefore, we will continue to perform our ROP inspections and do not plan to conduct an ISA or ISA-style inspection at Indian Point.

You also requested that the NRC institute a policy of sound recording at all NRC public meetings. Part of the NRC's fiscal responsibility as a government agency is to continually review the costs and benefits associated with contracting services such as those associated with recording meetings. We have determined that sound recording at NRC's public meetings is not necessary for the NRC to carry out its mission. The costs of purchasing audio/visual services for non-decision making meetings like annual assessment meetings are not financially justifiable. During public meetings, NRC staff members take comments and concerns from the public and assume that there are no new safety issues being raised. We also incorporate public feedback into lessons learned on how to make future public meetings more effective. Many of these public meetings are also attended by NRC senior management, who are involved in assessing meeting effectiveness and providing direction to the staff on the conduct and format for future public meetings.

G. Shaw

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Thank you for your concerns about the safe operations of the Indian Point nuclear plant. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Art Burritt, Branch Chief, at (610)337-5069.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

William M. Dean  
Regional Administrator  
Region I

G. Shaw

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Thank you for your concerns about the safe operations of the Indian Point nuclear plant. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Art Burritt, Branch Chief, at (610)337-5069.

Sincerely,

*/RA/*

William M. Dean  
Regional Administrator  
Region I

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