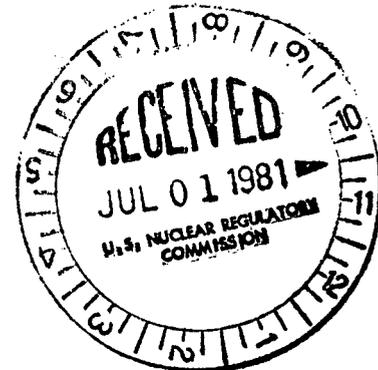




UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

JUN 29 1981



Robert L. Shand  
City Clerk - Treasurer  
City of Downey  
9425 Second Street  
P. O. Box 607  
Downey, California 90241

Dear Mr. Shand:

The June 8, 1981 resolution (No. 3972) of the City Council of the City of Downey, supporting the licensing of the San Onofre 2 and 3 nuclear power plants has been referred to me for reply. I am pleased to provide the following information regarding nuclear power plant licensing in general, and licensing of San Onofre 2 and 3 in particular.

Currently, the overall picture is one of a licensing process that is returning to predictability at a considerably enhanced level of safety. However, the implementation of this enhanced level of safety has raised a number of potential new issues in the contested hearings for both operating licenses and construction permits around the country. Some of these units were substantially complete at the time of the Three Mile Island accident or have been completed since then. However, we are confident the actions we have taken since TMI 2 and those we will take will provide major improvements in licensing schedules without compromising the regulatory requirements for safety.

With regard to licensing of San Onofre Units 2 and 3, the staff has completed the major part of its review. Staff safety evaluations were issued on December 31, 1980, February 6, 1981, February 25, 1981, and May 8, 1981. The review of the San Onofre Units 2 and 3 by the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards was completed on March 12, 1981. The Final Environmental Statement was issued by the NRC staff in April, 1981. The hearing on this project commenced on June 22, 1981.

We appreciate your interest in the San Onofre project. Please be assured that the NRC is taking every reasonable action to expedite the licensing process, consistent with our commitment to ensure the public health and safety.

Sincerely

Darrell G. Eisenhut, Director  
Division of Licensing  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

*Shand*