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Docket No. 50-261

FEB 4 1982

The Honorable John L. Napier
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Congressman Napier:

This letter is in response to your request for assistance which was directed to Mr. Kammerer, Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) on January 5, 1982, with regard to a letter from your constituent, Mr. Clarence M. Johnson. Mr. Johnson is concerned about a proposal by the Darlington County Administrator to build a "multi-million dollar" emergency operations center (EOC) in the county. According to Mr. Johnson, the justification for the construction of this facility is that it is required by NRC for emergency preparedness because the H. B. Robinson Steam Electric Plant, which is a nuclear power plant, is located in Darlington County.

The NRC does not place requirements on State and local governments for emergency preparedness facilities around nuclear power plants. It does require that State and local governments be prepared to take proper action to protect the public living near the plant in the event of a serious accident as a condition of allowing nuclear power reactors to operate. The NRC relies heavily on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for evaluation of State and local emergency response capability.

It is advisable for the local governments with boundaries within 10 miles of the plant to have an EOC or some other type of center to coordinate their protective action functions. This EOC need not be a sophisticated or dedicated facility for this purpose and can be a room or several rooms in an existing county building with adequate telephone and radio communications and adequate work space for the county emergency staff which should consist of police, civil defense and county emergency services. Many counties already have an EOC which was constructed for the National Civil Defense Program that they can use for this purpose. The nuclear attack requirements for EOC facilities are more extensive than the requirements for nuclear power plant accidents. In either case, FEMA is the lead agency in developing guidance and providing assistance to local governments in the construction of new facilities of this type which may serve multiple response purposes.

I trust this responds to your concerns.

Sincerely,

(Signed) T. A. Rehm

WPP

William J. Dircks
Executive Director for Operations

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*For previous concurrences
see attached ORC

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The NRC does not place requirements on State and local governments for emergency preparedness facilities around nuclear power plants. It does require that State and local governments be prepared to take proper action to protect the public living near the plant in the event of a serious accident. The NRC relies on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to evaluate the State and local emergency response capability, subject to its final review.

Under normal circumstances, it is advisable for the local governments with boundaries within 10 miles of the plant to have an EOC or some other type of center to coordinate their protective action functions. This EOC need not be a sophisticated or dedicated facility for this purpose and can be a room or several rooms in an existing county building with adequate telephone and radio communications and adequate work space for the county emergency staff which should consist of police, civil defense and county emergency services. Many counties already have an EOC which was constructed for the National Civil Defense Program that they can use for this purpose. The nuclear attack requirements for EOC facilities are more extensive than the requirements for nuclear power plant accidents. In either case, FEMA is the lead agency in determining requirements and providing assistance to local governments in the construction of new facilities of this type. The NRC's authority rests in assuring that the local government can properly respond to a plant emergency that has the possibility of a serious offsite consequence and that the licensee can provide this capability if the State and local governments cannot carryout their emergency functions.

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