



**UNITED STATES**  
**NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**  
REGION I  
2100 RENAISSANCE BLVD., Suite 100  
KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406-2713

May 31, 2018

Barry N. Connell  
President, Newburyport City Council  
City of Newburyport  
60 Pleasant Street  
P.O. Box 550  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Mr. Connell:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your April 17, 2018, letter, which requested that we investigate claims by Stephen B. Comley, and, in particular, convene a public hearing regarding the effectiveness of the evacuation plan for the public within the 10 mile Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) surrounding the Seabrook Nuclear Station.

In the area of emergency preparedness and response, the NRC works in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure the onsite and offsite emergency plans are adequate for protecting public health and safety. The regulation of onsite emergency response falls within the NRC's purview, while the offsite oversight responsibility rests with FEMA. Per the memorandum of understanding between NRC and FEMA, dated December 7, 2015, (ML15344A371<sup>1</sup>) the NRC relies on FEMA to provide a reasonable assurance finding on the adequacy of offsite emergency response programs, including the means for the timely evacuation of the public, for protecting the public health and safety.

The State of New Hampshire and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have the overall authority for making protective action decisions (sheltering, evacuation, etc.) for ensuring the safety of their public during a radiological event. The states' radiological emergency plans for implementing those decisions were developed by the state emergency management agencies and subsequently approved by FEMA. Additionally, FEMA evaluates the implementation of the States' radiological emergency plans during emergency exercises conducted on a biennial basis to ensure continued reasonable assurance. The most recent exercise for Seabrook was conducted on April 4, 2018. FEMA held a public meeting to discuss the results of the exercise on April 6. The results of FEMA's exercise evaluation will be made publicly available within the next few months in the Seabrook Station After-Action Report. The most recent After-Action Report available is from a July 2016 exercise (ML16363A414).

To date, the NRC has not received any concerns from FEMA regarding the States' ability to implement their plans including their ability to evacuate the public in a timely and safe manner.

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<sup>1</sup> Designation refers to an Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) accession number. Documents referenced in this letter are publicly-available using the accession number in ADAMS at <https://adams.nrc.gov/wba/>. For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to [pdr.resource@nrc.gov](mailto:pdr.resource@nrc.gov).

In addition to the meetings described in this letter, the NRC holds Annual Assessment Meetings to discuss the results of Seabrook Station performance. These meetings are held in the 10 mile EPZ and are typically held in late spring or early summer; the most recent was held on May 2. We also issue a meeting summary for those unable to attend (ML18142A293). This meeting with the public is focused on current plant performance. The NRC also takes questions on a variety of topics including emergency preparedness. As noted, evaluation of the adequacy of offsite emergency plans is FEMA's responsibility, so the NRC's response to these questions is limited to the adequacy of the licensee's onsite emergency preparedness program.

We relayed information regarding the most recent meeting to the Newburyport City Clerk, Richard Jones, to ensure the City Council was aware of the opportunity to address the NRC (ML18131A083). Separately, we communicated information about both the meetings to Mr. Comley for his awareness. Mr. Comley was present at the NRC's Annual Assessment Meeting and, as is documented in the meeting summary, was afforded an opportunity to speak. NRC attendees at the meeting included staff from the NRC's Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response who spoke with Mr. Comley one-on-one after the meeting.

Thank you for your interest in this issue. We will continue to provide regular opportunities to address any public concerns regarding Seabrook, including offsite emergency preparedness. If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact Jonathan Greives, Regional State Liaison Officer, at (610) 337-5337.

Sincerely,

**/RA James M. Trapp for:/**

David C. Lew  
Acting Regional Administrator

cc:

K. Schwartz, Director, MEMA

J. Giarrusso, MA State Liaison Officer, MEMA

S. Colman, Regional Assistance Committee Chairperson, FEMA, RI

LETTER TO NEWBURYPORT CITY COUNCIL DATED MAY 31, 2018

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