



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

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November 28, 1979

The Honorable Morris K. Udall  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy  
and the Environment  
Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to reply to your letter of October 15, 1979 regarding recent actions announced by NRC concerning the distribution of documents to the public. Unfortunately, several aspects of these actions have been misunderstood by members of the public and a certain amount of confusion has resulted regarding NRC's intentions.

First, on August 6, 1979, NRC announced in the Federal Register the establishment of a revised sales program for certain NRC publications, known as NUREG reports. Due to persistent complaints about the timeliness of availability and high costs of NRC formal reports that are sold through the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Technical Information Service, a direct sales program was initiated under an agreement with the U.S. Government Printing Office. Because of this initiative, NRC is now able to make NUREG-series reports immediately available for sale to the public at prices 50% less than the NTIS prices. The publications are also available at NRC two to six weeks earlier than they are at NTIS. This is a significant improvement in service to the public. The reports being handled by this program have always been sold to those who presently must buy them.

Second, the Commission decided to conduct a Trial Program to make all NUREG-series reports that are announced in the Federal Register even more readily available to those persons or organizations that are direct participants in our licensing proceedings. Anyone who identifies himself as a direct participant may obtain free, upon written requests, a copy of any report announced in the Federal Register as available free under this Trial Program. Once again, the program was established to improve public availability of formal NRC reports. The reason for a "trial" was to determine cost impacts. Two hundred copies of each report are set aside and have thus far been ample for the program.

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Third, the NRC maintains "service" lists for all ongoing licensing proceedings. These lists contain the names of those persons who are participants in the proceedings. The lists are used to distribute free copies of NRC issued information relevant to the proceeding. It has also been NRC practice to expand these lists to include anyone who had expressed any interest in the proceeding for the purpose of sending them free copies of Commission and Hearing Board notices of hearings and the final initial decisions. In addition, a practice has developed over the years of providing free copies of all Commission and Hearing Board issuances to a number of local attorneys, news services, industry representatives, and others. By letter of September 19, 1979, the Secretary contacted these recipients and asked their views on the need to continue this service. The proposal will, however, in no way affect the ability of participants in proceedings to continue to obtain full and free information concerning NRC decisions through the "service" process. Comments received on this proposal are being evaluated and the comments you have expressed will, of course, be considered. No action has been taken to change the present distribution of these issuances nor will any action be taken until all of these suggestions are examined carefully and proposed solutions discussed further with all recipients of the system.

Fourth, a significant increase in demand has been experienced for one type of publication called Regulatory Guides. These Guides are issued to provide technical and administrative guidance to licensees. It became impossible to meet the requirements of the Joint Committee on Printing Rules and Regulations and yet continue to provide the Guides free. In addition, the demand from industry has grown so substantial that the Commission would have had to add two staff members to simply handle the requests. Therefore, we included the Regulatory Guides in our NRC/GPO sales program. This was announced in the Federal Register on September 7, 1979. However, draft Regulatory Guides are still available free and the final resolutions are also provided free to anyone who comments on the draft. Final, published versions that pertain to nuclear power reactors are placed in our 150 public document rooms, in U.S. depository libraries and are available for sale for \$26.00. The price covers more than 3,800 pages and any additional issues that are published during the year. This program allows anyone with an active interest in Guide information to acquire such information at reasonable cost.

Fifth, the NRC adopted an expanded Board Notification Program in 1978. Under this program, any report, publication, or other document that is relevant to an ongoing licensing proceeding is made available free to all the participants in the affected proceedings. Such information is provided to the parties as NRC becomes aware of its relevance. This was done to assure that all pertinent information was readily available to all participants.

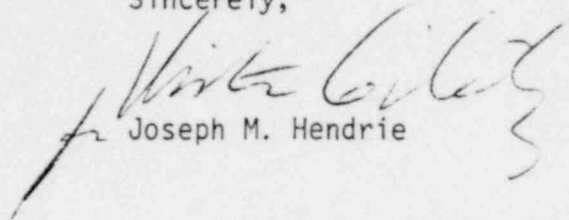
Honorable Morris K. Udall

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Finally, NRC has adopted a policy of mailing copies of any proposed or adopted changes in Regulations to any affected party or interest group. NRC maintains a special mailing list of "interest" groups that lists more than 225 different organizations. Any interest group that wishes to be on this list may simply write to the Director, Division of Technical Information and Document Control, Washington, D. C. 20555.

We hope that the above information helps resolve any misunderstandings about NRC's intentions. Additional ways to make NRC information more readily available through more effective mechanisms will continue to be actively sought.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joseph M. Hendrie".

Joseph M. Hendrie

1739 183