



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

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June 26, 1979

OFFICE OF THE
CHAIRMAN

Mr. Elmer B. Staats
Comptroller General of the United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Staats:

On March 30, 1979, the Comptroller General of the United States submitted a report to the Congress entitled "Areas Around Nuclear Facilities Should Be Better Prepared for Radiological Emergencies." The report made two specific recommendations to the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, one recommendation applicable to the Chairman and the Secretaries of Defense and Energy and specific recommendations to the Secretaries of Defense and Energy. In addition, the report made a recommendation to the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency that has direct implications for an interagency program for which the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff provides leadership.

I am pleased to provide you with the enclosed statement of actions the Nuclear Regulatory Commission plans to take in addressing the recommendations directed at this agency. It also includes a reaction to the recommendation made to the Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In addition, Commissioners Gilinsky and Bradford want to make clear their view that the NRC should allow nuclear power plants to begin operation only where satisfactory emergency plans covering the response of the utility and the local and State authorities are in place and where arrangements have been made for periodic exercise of these plans. They are not convinced, however, that the present State emergency plans, being developed and concurred in by the NRC, are what is required. For the longer term a definitive approach will be developed through a rulemaking as described in the Commission response. In the near term, they look to the recently formed NRC Task Force on Emergency Planning to develop an interim approach in about a month.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Hendrie
Chairman

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Enclosure:
Response to GAO Report

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