

NRC FDR



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

AUG 6 1979

Docket No.: 50-289

Mrs. Charles Frodkin
1417 Smokehouse Lane
Beaufort Farms
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110

Dear Mrs. Frodkin:

This is in response to your letter to Mr. Harold R. Denton, Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation. I can certainly understand and appreciate the views and concerns you expressed regarding potential plans for the restart of Three Mile Island, Unit 1 (TMI-1). I would like to summarize where we now stand with respect to your concerns.

A meeting was held at the request of Metropolitan Edison/General Public Utilities Corporation on June 11, 1979 to enable them to discuss with the staff, in preliminary terms, the possibility of restarting TMI-1. During the course of this meeting, Metropolitan Edison/General Public Utilities indicated a number of actions they were prepared to implement in order to provide a better basis for confidence that the TMI-1 reactor could be operated safely. Needless to say, these discussions resulted in no agreements or commitments by the staff regarding any aspect of the TMI-1 restart.

On July 2, 1979, the Commission issued an Order requiring that TMI-1 remain shut down until after a public hearing. This Order, a copy of which is enclosed, also made clear that the final decision on the restart of TMI-1 would be made by the Commission itself. In addition, the Commission plans to issue a further Order in the near future which will specify the hearing procedures to be used, and identify the specific technical concerns that led to the July 2, 1979 Order. These technical concerns are expected to be fully addressed during the hearing.

It is important to distinguish between delaying the restart of TMI-1 until the Presidential Commission Report is issued (presumably late October 1979), and delaying consideration of the matters involved with restart. We believe that it is appropriate at this time to consider the necessary and sufficient conditions for the restart of TMI-1, even though the actual startup would not come until much later, i.e., after the public hearing has been concluded and the Commission has reviewed the record. Thus, while we agree that much work remains to be accomplished before TMI-1 could be allowed to restart, we also believe discussions on those known plant improvements, or administrative changes, necessary for restart, can be initiated now.

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Mrs. Charles Frodkin

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Authorization to restart will not be allowed until the technical issues and concerns have been fully addressed, discussed in a public hearing, and that hearing record reviewed by the Commission. The Commission feels that full public participation is an integral and vital ingredient to all aspects dealing with those matters relating to TMI-1 restart.

Additionally, we will continue our intensive and urgent efforts to understand the lessons to be learned from the TMI-2 accident. These efforts not only include several independent and extensive studies within the Commission, but also involve close communication with other studies, including the Presidential Commission, Congressional inquiries, and a number of industry investigations. It is anticipated at this time that the results of a number of these investigations, including the Presidential Commission, will be available before all of the conditions for TMI-1 restart have been satisfied.

I trust this response adequately addresses the points raised in your letter.

Sincerely,



C. J. Heltemes, Jr., Chief
Standardization Branch
Division of Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
Copy of July 2, 1979 Commission Order

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