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JAN 22 1980

Docket 50-271

SSINS 6870

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
ATTN: Mr. Robert H. Groce
Licensing Engineer
20 Turnpike Road
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581

Gentlemen:

This is to inform you that during calendar year 1980, the NRC will be performing special team appraisals of the health physics programs at all operating nuclear power plants. The purpose of this special effort is to evaluate the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the total health physics program. In so doing, the teams will undoubtedly identify areas of weakness and examples of poor practice in addition to the normally identified items of noncompliance. You will be expected to respond to all substantive findings which will be identified during the exit meeting and documented in the appraisal report.

These special team appraisals will be performed in lieu of several of the routine inspections normally conducted in the area of health physics. The teams will be composed of both NRC personnel and DOE contractor personnel who will be acting as representatives of the NRC. Each team will include an IE health physics inspector from the NRC Regional Office as team leader, two contractor professional health physicists and, in some instances, other members from the NRC staff. The on-site phase of these appraisals will require approximately two weeks.

The scope of these appraisals will include the health physics organization, qualification and training of health physics staff, training of radiation workers, the radiological environmental monitoring program, the radiological protection program, and radioactive waste processing and effluent controls for both normal and off-normal conditions. In addition, actions taken in response to certain lessons learned from the Three Mile Island accident in the area of radiation protection will be evaluated.

Each operating nuclear power plant will be notified by the appropriate Regional Office several weeks in advance of the arrival of the appraisal team on-site. The specific date of arrival and security clearance data on team members will be provided at that time.

You are requested to provide your full cooperation to the teams during their performance of the health physics program appraisal. As part of this cooperation, it is expected that the appraisal team will be permitted unfettered access to the facility and escorts will be arranged in advance when escorts are required by facility security plans. The NRC inspector will be the only team member with a camera, and appropriate authorization for bringing a camera on-site should also be provided in advance.

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We appreciate your cooperation. Should you have any questions concerning these special team appraisals, please contact the NRC Regional Director.

Sincerely,

Victor Stello, Jr.
Director
Office of Inspection
and Enforcement

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