

TERA

FEBRUARY 23 1980

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POOR QUALITY PAGES

Mr. James R. Owen
2413 Summit Road
Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74003

Dear Mr. Owen:

Your letter to Chairman Ahearne regarding the expeditious restart of Three Mile Island Unit 1 (TMI-1) has been referred to me for response. I regret that this answer has been delayed. The accident and its consequences have created a substantial increase in the agency's workload, which has prevented us from responding to you as promptly as we would have liked.

On July 2, 1979, the Commission ordered that TMI-1 remain in a cold shutdown condition until further order by the Commission and stated that a public hearing would be held prior to restart of TMI-1. The Commission believes that public participation is a vital ingredient in matters related to TMI-1 restart plans.

On August 9, 1979, the Commission issued an additional Order on TMI-1 specifying the basis for the Shutdown Order and the procedures to govern the hearing regarding restart. On the basis of this hearing, the Commission will determine whether any further operation of TMI-1 will be permitted and, if so, under what conditions. I have enclosed a copy of the August 9, 1979, Order for your information.

The Commission's Order also identifies a number of items that must be resolved prior to restart. These items, which are listed on pages 5-7 of the Order, include but go beyond those required for restart of other Babcock & Wilcox-design pressurized water reactors similar to TMI Units 1 and 2. These additional items include those recommended by the Lessons Learned Task Force, which studied the TMI accident.

The Commission carefully considered the time required for completing all tasks related to the Order. (A Commission schedule calling for expeditious handling of the necessary NRC staff and procedural actions required for the hearing process is provided on the last page of the Commission's Order.) Based on that schedule,

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Mr. James R. Owen

FEBRUARY 28 1980

I do not believe that the restart of TMI-1 could occur before September 1980, approximately one year from the date of issuance of the August 9, 1979, Order. While we are concerned about the energy shortage, our primary responsibility is to the public health and safety.

I am pleased to provide you with this information.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Original signed by
E. G. Case
Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure: Commission Order dated August 9, 1979

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