



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS
POOR QUALITY PAGES

Mr. R. W. Johnson
P.O. Box 803
Hazelwood Hill
Ben Lomond, CA 95005

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I am writing in response to your letter to Commissioner Hendrie regarding the use of interlocks and other safety features at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant. I regret that this answer to your letter has been delayed. The accident and its consequences have created a substantial increase in the agency's workload, which has prevented me from responding to you as promptly as I would have liked to.

A task force was commissioned to study the Three Mile Island accident in order to make recommendations of actions in the areas of design, analysis and plant operations which should be required in order to provide substantial additional protection for the public health and safety. Included in their recommendations are actions which are relevant to your inquiry.

For example, the task force recognized that

"The accident at TMI-2 emphasized a previously recognized need to significantly increase operations reliability. The undetected existence of closed isolation valves in the auxiliary feedwater system is exemplary of a kind of human error in reactor operations that must be prevented. Among the many human or operational errors annually reported by the 70 plants now in operation, there are only a few comparable in significance to the defeat of an entire safety function, that is, loss of auxiliary feedwater. However, the fact that operations errors of this magnitude continue to occur at other plants emphasized the need for improvement. The task force recommends prompt action to significantly change the trend of reactor operating experience in this area."

Further details concerning changes in equipment design and operating procedures are given in the task force's report (NUREG-0578), an excerpt of which is enclosed.

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All current information about Three Mile Island and its availability is listed in "Title List of Publicly Available Documents: Three Mile Island - Docket 50-320" (NUREG-0568), its revision, NUREG-0568, Rev. 1, and Supplement 1 to Revision 1. These title lists can be obtained for \$4.50, \$5.50, and \$4.00, respectively, from the following address:

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Sincerely,

Original signed by

Harold R. Denton, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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DATE	2-1-80	2/1/80	2/4/80	2/4/80