

TERA

Docket No. 50-320

The Honorable Allen E. Ertel
United States House of
Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Congressman Ertel:

I am writing in response to your letter of February 25, 1980, to Chairman Ahearne in which you expressed your concern over apparently differing information given to you by the NRC in Washington and that given you by the NRC office in Middletown during your visit on February 14. You further indicated that the Middletown office has refused to provide information to the public concerning the status of events at the plant. This resulted in your recommendation that the Middletown office have daily updates on the conditions at Three Mile Island available for review by the interested public.

We have not been able to identify what information given to you by the NRC in Washington was in conflict with that given to you at the NRC office in Middletown. However, we agree with you that differing sources and presentation of factual material does lead to confusion and anxiety, and we have taken steps to assure that such occurrences are not repeated. In an attempt to provide you with an accurate account of the February 11 incident, I have had the NRC staff review the pertinent records relating to this event. Attached to this letter is a summary of the sequence of events and notifications which occurred on February 11, 1980, during this incident. I trust this information will eliminate any misinformation about this incident which may still exist.

With regard to your concern that information about the plant status is not readily available for public review at the Middletown office, we have taken steps to assure that such information will be available. Daily plant status sheets are available at the Middletown office for public inspection and posting of radiation monitoring results has been initiated. All of this information is open to the public and may be reviewed without going through the Freedom of Information Act procedures. We believe that your reference to disclosure of information via the

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Freedom of Information Act procedures was based on a discussion between members of the NRC staff and the public in which various NRC procedures for dissemination of information to the public were reviewed, including the Freedom of Information Act. Please be sure that both we and EPA will make every effort to assure that information on plant status, radiation releases to the environment and results of radiation monitoring measurements in locations surrounding the plant are made available to the public.

I trust this information is responsive to the concerns expressed in your letter.

Sincerely,

(Signed) William J. Dircks,

William J. Dircks
Acting Executive Director
for Operations

Enclosure:
Sequence of Events and
Notification for 2/11/80
Event

SEE PREVIOUS YELLOW FOR CONCURRENCES

OFFICE ▶	TMI Support	EDO	OCA			
SURNAME ▶	DBrinkman	WJDircks				
DATE ▶	4/ /80	4/ /80	5/ /80			

ATTACHMENT

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS AND NOTIFICATION FOR 2/11/80 EVENT

<u>TIME</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
1220	Initial conditions - "B" makeup pump in operation maintaining reactor coolant system pressure while in natural circulation cooling mode.
1220	Started "A" makeup pump to test pump operability.
1221	Received low discharge pressure alarm on "B" makeup pump.
1237	Stopped "A" makeup pump. Makeup tank level was dropping.
1240	Calculated leak rate based on level drop - approximately 9 gpm.
1250	Shift Supervisor ordered evacuation of Auxiliary Building. NRC/TMI staff members dispatched to Unit 2, based on public address announcement.
1258	Shift Supervisor declared a local emergency.
1310	Increased radiation levels reported on radiation air monitors on the 281 foot elevation of the Auxiliary Building.
1310	Local NRC/TMI staff notified.
1315	Licensee senior management and communications personnel notified of local emergency.
1320	NRC Senior Resident Inspector briefed of situation by the licensee's Emergency Director and Shift Supervisor.
1320 approx.	J. T. Collins (NRC) discussed the information available to the NRC with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Radiation Protection. At that time, the final effluent monitors did not show any noticeable increases from readings taken previous to the event. However, several hours after the incident was over, the licensee made an examination of these monitors' strip charts and then calculated that approximately 300 mCi of noble gases had been released. At no time were any of these releases detected off-site. Once this information was available from the licensee, it was transmitted to the Pennsylvania Bureau of Radiation Protection.

<u>TIME</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
1340	Licensee notified the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. It was discovered that they had already been notified by the NRC.
1428	First press release issued by Communication Services.
1520	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources notified of updated plant status.
1700 approx.	Second press release issued.
2030	Final press release issued.