

THE U.S. RADIATION POLICY COUNCIL  
c/o OSTP, EOP  
Washington, D.C. 20500

APR 4 1980

Honorable John F. Ahearne  
Chairman, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Mr. Ahearne:

The President has signed an Executive Order establishing the Radiation Policy Council. The Executive Order indicates that you or an official of your agency with the equivalent rank of Assistant Secretary or higher should represent your agency on the Council. Enclosed is a copy of the Executive Order and related directives.

To assure an orderly start for the Council, it would be desirable to have confirmation of your designee and an alternate within the next ten days. In addition, your recommendations as to the issues that should be on the Council's agenda as well as suggestions as to how the Council might function most effectively would be appreciated.

I have asked Carl Gerber of the Environmental Protection Agency, presently on assignment to the Office of Science and Technology Policy, to assist me in planning the Council activities. Mr. Gerber can be reached on (202) 395-4931. Copies of correspondence to the Council should be addressed to:

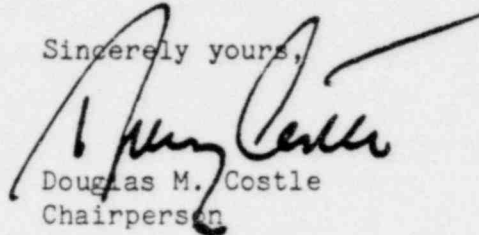
U.S. Radiation Policy Council Planning Office  
c/o Carl R. Gerber  
Room 3026 - NEOB  
OSTP/EOP  
Washington, D.C. 20500

I have asked Mr. Gerber to contact you and your staff regarding the date and agenda topics of our first Council meeting. We also would like to solicit the assistance of your staff in preparing papers for the initial Council meeting.

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I look forward to working with you and your designee on the many interesting policy, technical, and institutional issues to be addressed in formulating a truly national radiation protection program.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas M. Costle". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Douglas M. Costle  
Chairperson

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Robert E. Minogue  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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RADIATION-POLICY COUNCIL

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and statutes of the United States of America, and in order to coordinate the development of Federal radiation protection policy, it is hereby ordered as follows:

1-1. Establishment.

1-101. There is established the Radiation Policy Council.

1-102. The Council shall be composed of the heads of the following agencies or their representatives and such others as the President may designate:

- (a) The Department of Defense.
- (b) The Department of Justice.
- (c) The Department of Commerce.
- (d) The Department of Labor.
- (e) The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.
- (f) The Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- (g) The Department of Transportation.
- (h) The Department of Energy.
- (i) The Veterans Administration.
- (j) The Environmental Protection Agency.
- (k) The National Science Foundation.
- (l) The Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- (m) The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is invited to

participate.

1-103. The head of each agency represented on the Council may designate an official of the equivalent rank of Assistant Secretary or higher level to serve as the agency's representative.

1-104. The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, or any agency representative designated by him, shall chair the Council.

1-2. Functions.

1-201. The Council shall coordinate the formulation and implementation of Federal policy relating to radiation protection. In carrying out this function, the Council shall:

(a) advise on the formulation of broad radiation protection policy;

(b) monitor implementation of Federal radiation protection policies by Federal agencies;

(c) assist in the resolution of conflicts in jurisdiction among Federal agencies and recommend corrective legislation if needed;

(d) ensure effective liaison with the States and the Congress;

(e) serve as a forum for public participation and comment;

and  
(f) perform such other functions as the President may direct.

1-202. The Council shall keep the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and the Council on Environmental Quality informed of the activities of the Council.

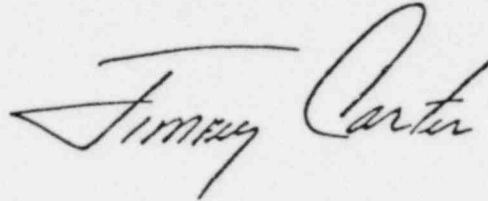
1-203. The Council shall prepare an annual report of its activities and transmit the report to the President and the heads of the agencies represented on the Council on or before September 30 of each year.

1-3. General Provisions.

1-301. The Environmental Protection Agency, to the extent permitted by law, shall furnish administrative support, funds, staff, and other assistance to the Council as necessary to carry out its functions.

1-302. Federal agencies, to the extent permitted by law, shall provide to the Council that information and assistance which it requests in order to carry out its functions.

1-303. The Council shall transmit its final annual report and terminate four years after the date of this Order.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jimmy Carter". The signature is written in dark ink and is centered on the page.

THE WHITE HOUSE,

FEBRUARY 21, 1980

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIR OF THE RADIATION POLICY COUNCIL

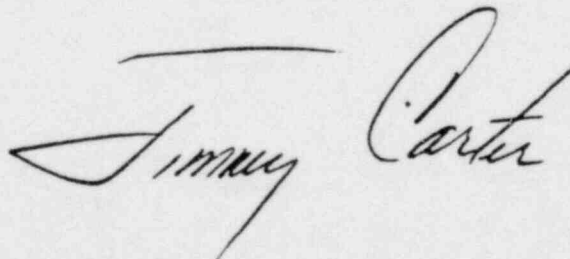
SUBJECT: Reducing Exposure to Ionizing Radiation

The Interagency Task Force on the Health Effects of Ionizing Radiation reviewed the major sources of ionizing radiation and identified a number of opportunities for radiation exposure reduction. Those opportunities have not received a detailed analysis of their risks, benefits, or cost effectiveness. The Task Force made a series of recommendations, including a concerted program to reduce exposure in the healing arts, the most significant source of man-made radiation.

I am directing the Radiation Policy Council to coordinate implementation of the Task Force recommendations for radiation exposure reduction. The Council should:

- o monitor the evaluation by Federal agencies of the feasibility, costs, risks, and benefits of each opportunity for exposure reduction;
- o monitor Federal agency implementation of the proposals for exposure reduction, when appropriate;
- o oversee a broad and effective program to reduce diagnostic radiation exposure from medical and dental sources;
- o coordinate a full and open review by responsible Federal agencies of exposure standards.

The Council should report to me on its implementation of the Task Force recommendations for radiation exposure reduction no later than September 30, 1980.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jimmy Carter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom right of the page.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIR OF THE RADIATION POLICY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Review of the Radiation Guidance Function  
held by the Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency currently has the authority to provide broad guidance for Federal radiation protection and control activities. The Interagency Task Force on the Health Effects of Ionizing Radiation noted the concern which has been expressed about the appropriate scope of the guidance function and the response of other Federal agencies to the efforts of the Environmental Protection Agency. Many believe that the guidance function is ambiguous, especially in relation to other statutory authorities.

In order to improve interagency coordination and cooperation and to define clear lines of authority, I am directing the Radiation Policy Council to undertake a comprehensive review of the guidance function and other statutory authorities bearing on radiation protection. The Council should:

- o determine the most effective procedures and the factors to be considered for developing guidance for Federal agencies;
- o define the appropriate scope of the guidance authority;
- o develop procedures to permit general oversight of guidance implementation by Federal agencies;  
and
- o recommend executive action or legislation to clarify the guidance authority, if necessary.

In defining issues to be addressed during its review of the guidance function, the Council should consult the report of the Interagency Task Force on the Health Effects of Ionizing Radiation.

While the Council is conducting its review, the guidance authority should continue to be exercised as provided under Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1970.

The Council should make recommendations to me no later than September 30, 1980.

*Jimmy Carter*



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIR OF THE RADIATION POLICY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Public Information Program on the Health Effects of Radiation Exposure, Sources of Radiation, and Ways to Minimize Exposure

The Interagency Task Force on the Health Effects of Ionizing Radiation examined the need for programs to inform the public and specific target population about the health effects of radiation exposure, sources of radiation, and steps that can be taken to minimize exposure. In its report, the Task Force identified the information needs of different groups and made a number of recommendations to improve the information programs of Federal agencies. The Radiation Policy Council should:

- o assure that the Task Force recommendations for developing information programs are carried out by Federal agencies, and
- o provide central coordination for Federal information programs concerned with radiation.

The Council should report to me on the status of Federal information programs concerned with ionizing radiation no later than September 30, 1980.

*Jimmy Carter*

Extract from  
THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON THE ACCIDENT AT  
THREE MILE ISLAND

regarding tasks assigned to the Radiation Policy Council

E. WORKER AND PUBLIC HEALTH SAFETY

Kemeny Commission Recommendations: The Kemeny Commission urged the following: expanded and better coordinated health-related radiation effects research with an interagency committee to establish an agenda for research efforts (E.1); mandatory review by HEW of NRC radiation-related health actions (E.2); expanded state and local programs for educating health professionals and emergency response personnel (E.3); and advance preparation for emergencies (E.4 and 5).

The President's Proposal: The potential hazards to workers and the general public from accidents at nuclear power plants are closely related to the health hazards from exposures to radiation from other sources. Early last year, concern was raised about potential latent effects from exposure to radioactive fall-out in Nevada and Utah, about risks for workers in energy and defense activities, and about the radiation hazards of X-ray diagnoses and therapy. The need for coordinated policy, better research, opportunities for public input, and better public information became clear. On October 23, the President announced several Administration initiatives to meet these needs: first, the establishment of a Radiation Policy Council, chaired by the Administrator of the EPA, with participation of policy-making officials of all the relevant regulatory, research, and operating agencies; and second, the establishment of an Interagency Radiation Research Committee, chaired by the Director of the National Institutes of Health. The Council and the Research Committee provide expert and open processes for meeting research needs and enhancing guidance for worker and public protection from potential radioactive exposures.

The President is taking the following additional actions:

- o NRC is requested to submit for review all actions affecting worker and public health and safety to the Radiation Policy Council.
- o Utilities should respond expeditiously to NRC's upgraded requirements for advance preparation for the mitigation of emergencies.
- o The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is directed to address the need for improved advance preparation for emergencies and public education programs in the context of state emergency response plans.
- o DOE is directed to strengthen its program to develop technologies for reducing the radiation exposure of workers at nuclear power plants.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

### E. WORKER AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. The Commission recommends the establishment of expanded and better coordinated health-related radiation effects research. This research should include, but not be limited to:

- a. biological effects of low levels of ionizing radiation;
- b. acceptable levels of exposure to ionizing radiation for the general population and for workers;
- c. development of methods of monitoring and surveillance, including epidemiologic surveillance to monitor and determine the consequences of exposure to radiation of various population groups, including workers;
- d. development of approaches to mitigate adverse health effects of exposure to ionizing radiation; and
- e. genetic or environmental factors that predispose individuals to increased susceptibility to adverse effects.

This effort should be coordinated under the National Institutes of Health -- with an interagency committee of relevant federal agencies to establish the agenda for research efforts -- including the commitment of a portion of the research budget to meet the specific needs of the restructured NRC.

2. To ensure the best available review of radiation-related health issues, including reactor siting issues, policy statements or regulations in that area of the restructured NRC should be subject to mandatory review and comment by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. A time limit for the review should be established to assure such review is performed in an expeditious manner.

3. The Commission recommends, as a state and local responsibility, an increased program for educating health professionals and emergency response personnel in the vicinity of nuclear power plants.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

4. Utilities must make sufficient advance preparation for the mitigation of emergencies:

a. Radiation monitors should be available for monitoring of routine operations as well as accident levels.

b. The emergency control center for health-physics operations and the analytical laboratory to be used in emergencies should be located in a well-shielded area supplied with uncontaminated air.

c. There must be a sufficient health-related supply of instruments, respirators, and other necessary equipment for both routine and emergency conditions.

d. There should be an adequate maintenance program for all such health-related equipment.

5. An adequate supply of the radiation protective (thyroid blocking) agent, potassium iodide for human use, should be available regionally for distribution to the general population and workers affected by a radiological emergency.

Extract from

THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON THE ACCIDENT AT  
THREE MILE ISLAND

regarding tasks assigned to the Radiation Policy Council

G. THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Kemeny Commission Recommendations: The Commission found that there were a number of deficiencies in providing information to the public during the accident. The Commission recommended the following actions: Federal and State agencies and utilities should prepare a public information program clearly defining their respective responsibilities (G.1); the logistics and resources for information distribution should be improved (G.2); major media outlets and local news media should improve their capabilities to understand and process information for public consumption (G.3); plans for establishing emergency broadcast networks should be developed (G.4); and the public should be routinely informed of abnormal radiation measurements (G.5).

The President's Proposal: The President fully supports these recommendations. Actions have already been taken by State and local agencies and utilities to implement many of them. In addition, the President is taking the following actions:

- o NRC should continue to make prompt announcements of abnormal radiation measurements.
- o The Radiation Policy Council is directed to work with media representatives to develop a program for improving media coverage of radiological emergencies.
- o Within the context of off-site emergency response planning, FEMA is directed to develop procedures for dissemination of information during an emergency.
- o FEMA is directed to review progress in this area and advise the Oversight Committee on the need for further Federal assistance.
- o The President's reorganization proposal will empower the Chairman to act on behalf of the Commission and be its spokesman during an emergency.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

### G. THE PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO INFORMATION

1. Federal and state agencies, as well as the utility, should make adequate preparation for a systematic public information program so that in time of a radiation-related emergency, they can provide timely and accurate information to the news media and the public in a form that is understandable. There should be sufficient division of briefing responsibilities as well as availability of informed sources to reduce confused and inaccurate information. The Commission therefore recommends:

a. Since the utility must be responsible for the management of the accident, it should also be primarily responsible for providing information on the status of the plant to the news media and to the public; but the restructured NRC should also play a supporting role and be available to provide background information and technical briefings.

b. Since the state government is responsible for decisions concerning protective actions, including evacuations, a designated state agency should be charged with issuing all information on this subject. This agency is also charged with the development of and dissemination of accurate and timely information on off-site radiation doses resulting from releases of radioactivity. This information should be derived from appropriate sources. (See recommendation F.1.) This agency should also set up the machinery to keep local officials fully informed of developments and to coordinate briefings to discuss any federal involvement in evacuation matters.

2. The provision of accurate and timely information places special responsibilities on the official sources of this information. The effort must meet the needs of the news media for information but without compromising the ability of operational personnel to manage the accident. The Commission therefore recommends that:

a. Those who brief the news media must have direct access to informed sources of information.

b. Technical liaison people should be designated to inform the briefers and to serve as a resource for the news media.

## COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

c. The primary official news sources should have plans for the prompt establishment of press centers reasonably close to the site. These must be properly equipped, have appropriate visual aids and reference materials, and be staffed with individuals who are knowledgeable in dealing with the news media. These press centers must be operational promptly upon the declaration of a general emergency or its equivalent.

3. The coverage of nuclear emergencies places special responsibilities on the news media to provide accurate and timely information. The Commission therefore recommends that:

a. All major media outlets (wire services, broadcast networks, news magazines, and metropolitan daily newspapers) hire and train specialists who have more than a passing familiarity with reactors and the language of radiation. All other news media, regardless of their size, located near nuclear power plants should attempt to acquire similar knowledge or make plans to secure it during an emergency.

b. Reporters discipline themselves to place complex information in a context that is understandable to the public and that allows members of the public to make decisions regarding their health and safety.

c. Reporters educate themselves to understand the pitfalls in interpreting answers to "what if" questions. Those covering an accident should have the ability to understand uncertainties expressed by sources of information and probabilities assigned to various possible dangers.

4. State emergency plans should include provision for creation of local broadcast media networks for emergencies that will supply timely and accurate information. Arrangements should be made to make available knowledgeable briefers to go on the air to clear up rumors and explain conditions at the plant. Communications between state officials, the utility, and the network should be prearranged to handle the possibility of an evacuation announcement.

5. The Commission recommends that the public in the vicinity of a nuclear power plant be routinely informed of local radiation measurements that depart appreciably from normal background radiation, whether from normal or abnormal operation of the nuclear power plant, from a radioactivity cleanup operation such as that at TMI-2, or from other sources.