

PDR  
50-309



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

May 27, 1980

The Honorable Joseph E. Brennan  
Governor of Maine  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Governor Brennan:

We appreciate the concern you expressed in your May 7, 1980 letter to Chairman John F. Ahearne, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), regarding the changing situation for nuclear power plant emergency preparedness. This agency has placed a high priority on upgrading the state of emergency preparedness at and around nuclear power plants. The NRC is working closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to develop coordinated Federal guidance as expeditiously as possible.

The NRC published, for comment, proposed amendments to its rules concerning emergency preparedness at and around nuclear power reactors on December 19, 1980. The NRC staff is currently revising these proposed rule changes in consideration of the comments received. The staff plans to submit its recommendation on the final rule to the Commission before the end of May. We expect the Commission will meet on the staff's recommended final rule in June.

By direction of President Carter on December 7, 1979, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been given lead responsibility for review of emergency plans of State and local authorities in the environs of nuclear power plants. The NRC and FEMA developed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to clarify the two agencies' roles in this regard. According to the MOU, FEMA will review State and local emergency preparedness. Upon completion of its review, FEMA will provide its findings on the adequacy of offsite emergency plans to NRC, and the NRC will then make the licensing decisions based on the final NRC regulations on emergency preparedness.

NRC and FEMA have jointly developed detailed emergency preparedness criteria, NUREG-0654/FEMA-REP-1, for interim use and comments as noted in your letter. The comment period on this document has just ended, and NRC and FEMA will revise the document this summer. It appears at this time that revisions will be principally for clarification and that there will be no major changes to the concepts in this document. Therefore, in light of the tight schedule requirements in the proposed rule, planning should go forward using the interim version of NUREG-0654/FEMA-REP-1 as a basis. We believe that most of the criteria can be met by January 1, 1981, based on the work initiated by utilities, States and local governments

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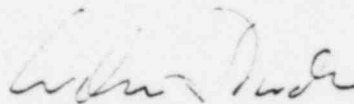
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over the last several months. The staff will recommend to the Commission that the deadline for a public notification system (which would only be activated by State or local governmental authorities) be extended to July 1, 1981, in view of the time required to obtain and install the appropriate equipment.

While funding has not been explicitly addressed by the NRC regulation, FEMA and NRC expect that the nuclear facility operator will have an interest in providing certain manpower and capital expenditures needed by State and local governments to meet the emergency preparedness requirements.

I trust this is responsive to your concerns.

Sincerely,



William J. Dircks  
Acting Executive Director  
for Operations