



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

January 11, 1990

The Honorable Slade Gorton
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gorton:

This letter is in response to constituent correspondence you received from Captain Earl E. Eigabroadt (U.S. Army Ret.) concerning the licensing of nuclear power plants. Mr. Eigabroadt's letter to you is dated October 13, 1989 and was forwarded to us by Cristena L. Bach, Director of Congressional Affairs at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on December 19, 1989.

In his letter, Captain Eigabroadt argues the need for a licensing regime for nuclear power plants which provides for licensing construction and operation at the same time, and which precludes the need for expensive modifications of the plant or its design during construction.

After a rulemaking process which included two rounds of public comment, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) promulgated a new body of regulations, 10 C.F.R. Part 52 (enclosed), which establishes a new licensing regime very much like the regime Captain Eigabroadt believes is desirable.

The new regulations provide for the issuance of licenses which combine in a single license a construction permit with an operating license which permits operation upon a showing that the plant has been constructed in conformity with the combined license. In order to assure that the determination that construction conforms to the license can be made without unexpected and costly disputes over what standards are to be met, the new regulations provide that the combined license will include the inspections, tests, and analyses which are necessary and sufficient to show that construction conforms to the license. The new regulations envision a "sign-as-you-go" process which should assure the timeliness of the NRC staff's review of construction. The new regulations also provide for the certification of standardized nuclear power plant designs before construction sites are chosen for them.

Both standardization and the regime of combined licenses are possible because the nation now has enough experience with the design, construction, and operation of nuclear power plants to enable plant designers to bring to the NRC a complete description of a design before it is constructed. The first designs are now before the NRC for certification as standard designs.

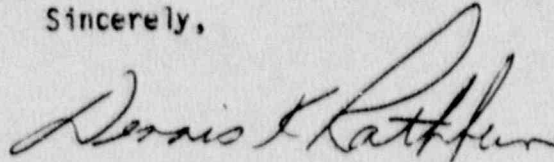
FULL TEXT ASCII SCAN

9002050117 900111
FDR ORG NGPZ
PDC

CC52
1/1

It is the Commission's hope that these new regulations will not only assure that the licensing and construction of a nuclear power plant can proceed with the greatest possible efficiency and predictability, but will also help make possible an enhancement of the safety and reliability of nuclear power and an enhancement of public participation in the licensing process.

Sincerely,



Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Congressional Affairs
Office of Governmental and
Public Affairs

Enclosures:

1. October 13, 1989 Letter
from Captain Eigabroadt
to Senator Gorton
2. November 21, 1989 Letter
from Senator Gorton to
J.M. Kennedy of FERC
3. 10 C.F.R. Part 52, regulations
on standardization and
combined licenses

It is the Commission's hope that these new regulations will not only assure that the licensing and construction of a nuclear power plant can proceed with the greatest possible efficiency and predictability, but will also help make possible an enhancement of the safety and reliability of nuclear power and an enhancement of public participation in the licensing process.

Sincerely,

Dennis K. Rathbun, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

~~In duplicate~~

Enclosures:

1. October 13, 1989 Letter from Captain Eigabroadt to Senator Gorton
2. November 21, 1989 Letter from Senator Gorton to J.M. Kennedy of FERC
3. 10 C.F.R. Part 52, regulations on standardization and combined licenses

OFC	: OGC <i>Blower</i>	: OGC <i>Top</i>	: OCA <i>DR</i>	:	:	:
NAME	: SCrockett:pw	: TRothschild	: DKRathbun <i>TM</i>	:	:	:
DATE	: 1/10/90	: 1/10/90	: 1/11/90	:	:	: