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March 7, 1990

Honorable Kenneth Carr  
Chairman  
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing about questions raised by Mr. Joseph D. Wampler concerning defects in radiographs of welds at the Seabrook site. Information provided the Subcommittee to date on this matter engenders the following additional questions.

- I. Seabrook IR 90-80 (p. 92) states that "... as documented in CAT IR 84-07 and discussed in IR 85-31; the licensee conducted an independent third party review of all RT film stored onsite, whether provided by vendors or shot by site contractors."
  - A. What findings or other events precipitated the review of radiographs referred to on page 92 of Seabrook IR 90-80?
  - B. Did employees of the licensee or its contractors prepare a nonconformance report that stated that such a review would constitute a corrective action resulting from deficiencies identified in the course of reviews by the licensee and/or its contractors? If so, what nonconformance report led to this review?
  - C. If no specific nonconformance report resulted in the radiograph review, what group of nonconformance or deficiency reports led to this review?
  - D. What is the name of the entity that conducted the third party review of all RT film stored onsite, whether provided by vendors or shot by site contractors? How many person-months were expended upon this review? On what date was the review initiated? On what date was it completed?

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- E. With regard to the licensee's third party review of all RT film stored onsite, whether provided by vendors or shot by site contractors, what did the report on this review state to be its purpose, objective, findings and conclusions?
- F. Please provide a copy of those portions of Seabrook IR 84-07 which the staff believes documents the licensee's third party review of all RT film stored onsite, whether provided by vendors or shot by site contractors.
- G. With respect to the third party NDE review, the report of inspection 85-31, conducted October 21 thru December 6, 1985 states:

The inspector discussed the licensee's third party review of nondestructive examinations for different fabricators onsite and also the licensee program for review of radiographic film for vendor supplied welds. The third party review involved a random selection of welds inspected by liquid penetrant, magnetic particle and radiography. The licensee implemented this program until approximately April 1984 when it was discontinued because additional problems were not being found and very little activity requiring NDE remained to be completed.

The inspector also reviewed the results of the licensee's overview of radiographic film for vendor supplied welds. To date, the licensee has performed an overview of virtually all vendor supplied radiographic film. Where problems were found, such as geometric unsharpness failing to meet the ASME Code, radiography was reperformed onsite and repairs were made, if necessary.

The inspector found all areas of review acceptable. No violations were identified.

- 1. Why was the foregoing discussion of the third party review not included in the report of CAT inspection 84-07, conducted in May 1984?
- 2. With respect to the foregoing statement from 85-31:
  - a. what specific "problems were found?"
  - b. how many welds were re-radiographed?
  - c. how many weld repairs were made and what was the nature of any such repairs?

H. While IR 90-80, citing IR 84-07 and 85-31, implies that all radiographs of safety-related welds, including the Pullman-Higgins radiographs, were reviewed by an independent third party, it is unclear from the text of IR 84-07 and IR 85-31 that all such radiographs were in fact reviewed by the third party. Is it the NRC staff position that all such radiographs were reviewed by the independent third party? If so, what is the specific text in an inspection report upon which the NRC staff bases this position?

II. Please provide an enumeration of nuclear reactor projects wherein the first review by a Level III examiner (employed by a major welding entity on the site such as Pullman-Higgins at Seabrook) resulted in a 20% reject rate.

III. The February 28 memorandum from Mr. Russell to Mr. Murley states in Item 4, that:

On January 12, 1984, the examiner [i.e. Wampler] was advised ... that the completion of those NCRs would be reviewed during routine NRC inspection.

Was a review of Wampler's 16 incomplete NCRs conducted? If not, why not? Why did Seabrook IR 83-22 not mention the 16 incomplete NCRs which NRC officials, during the period covered by IR 83-22, had stated would be the subject of review?

IV. The February 28 memorandum from Mr. Russell to Mr. Murley states in Item 4 that Seabrook IR 83-22 had "documented acceptable completion of the last two NCRs generated by the examiner." This appears to be a reference to Wampler's last two nonconformance reports, NCR 5689 and NCR 5773. Inspection Report 83-22 stated that these two NCRs "initiated by the departed Level III had been properly tracked and were already dispositioned." The discussion of NCR 5689 and NCR 5773 in Item 4 and IR 83-22 gives rise to the following questions:

A. What deficiencies were described in NCR 5689 and NCR 5773?

B. What was the root cause of the deficiencies described in NCR 5689 and NCR 5773?

C. What corrective actions were specified to remedy the deficiencies described in NCR 5689 and NCR 5773?

D. What did Item 4 in the February 28 memorandum mean when it stated that IR 83-22 had "documented acceptable completion of the last two NCRs generated by the examiner?"

- E. What did IR 83-22 mean when it stated that NCR 5689 and NCR 5773 "had been properly tracked and were already dispositioned?"
- V. To date, we have been provided no evidence that the review, which NRC staff said would be conducted, of Wampler's 16 incomplete NCRs was ever conducted. If this review was not conducted, do NRC officials know the substance of the deficiencies described in Mr. Wampler's 16 not-completed nonconformance reports? If so, what is the substance of the deficiencies described in these 16 NCRs? If not, what is the basis for the implication in Mr. Russell's February 28 memorandum to the effect that deficiencies identified by Mr. Wampler had been corrected?
- VI. Mr. Russell's February 28, 1990 memorandum leaves the impression that NRC staff have confidence that Mr. Wampler's findings regarding radiographs and/or welds had been recognized and the deficiencies implicit therein corrected. This confidence, we infer, was derived from a series of inspections. Yet, the various inspection reports provided us to date (e.g. 82-06, 83-22, 84-07 and 90-80), as far as we can tell, do not even recognize that problems of the magnitude described by Wampler even occurred; nor do these reports contain sufficient documentation to enable an independent reviewer to determine the qualitative and quantitative nature of deficiencies in activities carried out by the contractor responsible for a significant portion of the safety-related welding at Seabrook. What then is the basis for NRC management and/or the Commission to make a finding that safety-related welding activities at Seabrook were conducted in accord with the Commission's regulations?

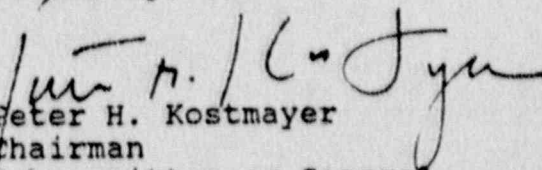
I have been informed that NRC staff is seeking to interview Mr. Wampler on or about March 13. I would assume that, prior to any such interview, the NRC interviewers would wish to be fully informed on this matter and would, therefore, have in hand the information requested in this letter. I would also assume that the Commission had this information prior to making its decision to allow the Seabrook reactor to operate at full power.

The Commission's basis for finding that safety-related welds at Seabrook complied with NRC regulations will be one of the issues addressed at the Subcommittee's March 14 hearing on the Seabrook project. Accordingly, I would appreciate your providing prior to March 13, 1990 the answers to the foregoing questions. To provide the answers prior to March 13 should require no substantive effort

since, as I have indicated in the preceding paragraph, the Commission presumably possessed the requested information before authorizing full power operation.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Peter H. Kostmayer  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on General  
Oversight and Investigations

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the Matter of

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW  
HAMPSHIRE, ET AL.  
(Seabrook Station, Units 1 and 2)

Docket No. (s) 50-443/444-DL

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing LTR TO CARR RE WAMPLER QUEST, have been served upon the following persons by U.S. mail, first class, except as otherwise noted and in accordance with the requirements of 10 CFR Sec. 2.712.

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Docket No. (s) 50-443/444-OL  
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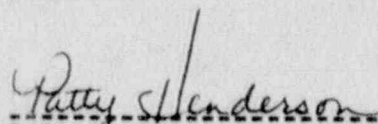
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The Honorable  
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ATTN: Janet Coit  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dated at Rockville, Md. this  
8 day of March 1990

  
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Office of the Secretary of the Commission