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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY CONSERVATION
AND POWER
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

W. MICHAEL MCCABE
STAFF DIRECTOR

April 9, 1982

The Honorable Nunzio Palladino
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In its Annual Report to Congress entitled "Review and Evaluation of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission Safety Research Program for Fiscal Year 1983," the ACRS noted the rapid increase in cumulative occupational exposure associated with the operation, maintenance and modification of commercial nuclear power plants.

The report states:

"Whereas a few years ago, the generally accepted value for a single power plant was about 500 person-rem per year, the latest tabulation published by the NRC showed that the average collective dose per operating unit increased by 33 percent between 1979 and 1980 and now approximates 790 person-rem per year. Projections are that some individual plants will have collective doses of as much as 5,000 person-rem for 1982."

In view of occupational exposure increases of this magnitude and the increasing number of workers who have been and will be exposed, please respond to the following questions on or before April 29, 1982.

1. Does the NRC maintain, or require its licensees to maintain, complete exposure records for all workers in radioactive portions of a nuclear facility?
2. Does NRC maintain a "tracking" system for licensees to ensure against overexposure of individual workers who may work at more than one nuclear facility?
3. Does the NRC maintain, or require its licensees to maintain, a screening process to determine whether an

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applicant has worked or been exposed at any other nuclear facility or has exceeded his or her exposure limit at the same nuclear facility?

4. Does the NRC maintain, or require its licensees to maintain, long-term health records of employees who have been radiologically exposed to determine long-term health effects of ionizing radiation?
5. What activities does the NRC conduct in conjunction with the Transuranic Register? If none currently, have there been such activities in the past? Is the NRC considering instituting or reinstituting its participation in the Register? If not, why not?
6. Please describe in sufficient detail each program referred to and numerically identified in the following excerpt from the ACRS report previously cited.

"We are encouraged to note that the NRC has recognized the importance of this problem and has completed (1) initial steps for developing a comprehensive research program for addressing the associated regulatory needs. We are encouraged also to see the (2) related research activities that have been developed to fill voids in the regulatory aspects of a wide variety of problems associated with the protection of workers at nuclear facilities."

7. To what do you attribute the increase in worker exposure?
 - a. Has the NRC prepared studies to determine projected levels of worker exposure?
 - b. Assuming that steam generator tube repairs account in large part for the recent increase in worker exposure, what specific guidelines has the NRC distributed to utilities replacing or repairing steam generators to ensure the lowest reasonably achievable exposure levels?
 - c. Does the NRC foresee problems of this type occurring for other repairs or retrofits?

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8. Does the NRC review for completeness and accuracy the training sessions for nuclear "jumpers" conducted by licensees? Please provide the Subcommittee all policy guidance provided to licensees on this subject and a description of its review of these training programs.
9. Does the NRC promulgate maximum cumulative exposure limits for each licensee? If not, why not? If so, what sanctions are available to the NRC in the event such limit is exceeded?

Sincerely,


Richard L. Ottinger
Chairman

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