

South Carolina
Department of
Health and
Environmental
Control

32 AGO 25 P.M.

OFFICE OF SECRET
DOCKETING & SERVICE

BOARD
J. Lorin Mason, Jr., M.D., Chairman
Gerald A. Kaynard, Vice-Chairman
Leonard W. Douglas, M. D., Secretary
Oren L. Brady, Jr.
Moses H. Clarkson, Jr.
Barbara P. Nuessle
James A. Spruill, Jr.

COMMISSIONER
Robert S. Jackson, M.D.
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, S.C. 29201

August 23, 1982

DOCKET NUMBER

PRM 50-33

(47 FR 29252)

6

Secretary of the Commission
ATTN: Docketing and Service Branch
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Re: Comments on Petition for Proposed Rulemaking
(Docket No. PRM-50-33)

Dear Sir:

The Bureau of Radiological Health does not support this petition insofar as it requests that the frequency of full-scale participation in emergency exercises be reduced to once every two years.

The state plan establishes requirements for the various participating agencies which exceed the normal responsibilities of each agency. Departments which normally operate autonomously must subordinate themselves to the direction of the FEOC, an entity which comes into existence only for the emergency response. Information and control must flow in ways which deviate significantly from those ordinary operations.

The problem which faces the agencies also differs qualitatively from ordinary experience, in that not every agency has the capability to detect radiation; decisions must be made on the basis of information which must be decoded, in a sense. Because of the unique nature of the requirements for a successful response to a radiological emergency, annual refresher training is necessary to insure that all of the participating agencies and individuals are fully aware of their responsibilities.

On the other hand, county and local government participation in emergency response is more closely aligned with the normal day-to-day functions of local government. In South Carolina's plan, as in many others, county responsibilities are chiefly concerned with maintaining security and traffic control; providing food, shelter, and transportation; and doing all these based largely on information which comes from either the utility or the

DS 11
Add: J. Phillips
4000 WBB
M. Jamgochian
1130 55

8208300256 820823
PDR PRM
50-330
PDR

Acknowledged by card 8/27/82 emp

state acting through the FEOC. Counties routinely provide most of these functions daily.

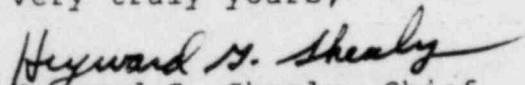
We suggest that for the foregoing reasons it might not be so important that the counties be exercised each year specifically on radiological emergency response if the county response plan is tested and found satisfactory in other ways. This has an additional advantage in that it is difficult to provide realistic training for two or three counties surrounding a fixed nuclear facility if the scenario must involve the plant; either one county bears the brunt of the response and the others are inadequately exercised, or the scenario must be so unrealistic that its training value is compromised. On the the other hand, if counties had more flexibility in demonstrating their capability to provide adequate response, their resentment of large annual costs required for continued operation of one facility might diminish and at the same time FEMA and NRC would satisfy their responsibility to assure protection of the public.

Notwithstanding the fact that the requirement for each utility to conduct "at least annually.../a/ full-scale exercise which tests as much of the licensee, State, and local emergency plans as is reasonably achievable" (10 CFR Part 50, Appendix E, Section F) has been on the books for a number of years, the direction which we have received concerning the new standard of review to be applied to county participation in an "off-year" exercise (in which the state is not fully participating) has been somewhat tentative. We hope that the Commission will take this opportunity to consider the limitations and concerns of the local and county governments as it establishes the standards by which emergency exercises will be judged.

Federal agencies also have significant responsibilities during the conduct of emergency response. We would like to see realistic participation by these agencies during exercises in each state; heretofore we have seen only "observers", never "players". The proposed changes would be more palatable to state and local officials if federal agencies assumed a comparable commitment for themselves.

We support the petition for proposed rulemaking insofar as it seeks to reduce the burden at local and county levels. On the other hand, the current requirement that state agencies participate in one exercise each year at one of the sites in the state provides a reasonable level of training and we make no comment on the proposed revision reducing that requirement to participation every second year.

Very truly yours,


Heyward G. Shealy, Chief
Bureau of Radiological Health

HGS:kn

cc: Mr. G. Wayne Kerr, Director
Office of State Programs