



PDR

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

September 5, 1990

The Honorable Gerry E. Studds
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Studds:

I am responding to your July 27, 1990 letter concerning our Inspector General's recent report on the investigation of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff's testimony on the status of off-site emergency preparedness during the October 14 and December 9, 1988 Commission meetings. These meetings were held to consider information pertinent to the restart of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station.

The Commission is concerned that the report findings raise questions about the thoroughness of staff's assessment of off-site emergency preparedness at Pilgrim and the accuracy of certain information provided by the staff during meetings with the Commission. Although the Inspector General has confirmed that there is not evidence sufficient to substantiate that any member of the NRC staff intentionally provided inaccurate information to the Commission, we recognize that there are lessons to be learned from the conduct of the Pilgrim off-site emergency planning review. Accordingly, in the enclosed August 17, 1990 memorandum to the Executive Director for Operations, we have directed that in conducting its independent "lessons-learned" review, the staff should specifically address whether any staff omission or error occurred in this review and the need for any additional staff guidance or procedures. We expect to receive the results of that review by September 30, 1990, and will forward a copy to you. I can assure you that this report will be carefully reviewed by the Commission.

With regard to the current status of emergency planning at the Pilgrim site, the steady improvements in off-site emergency planning and capability observed by the staff have been documented in periodic status reports to the Commission, the latest of which was dated June 28, 1990. A copy of this report was previously provided to your office. The information for each town was individually reviewed and telephonically confirmed (in one instance we received written comments) by locally designated emergency preparedness

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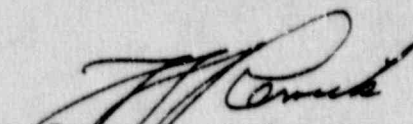
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officials prior to submission of the status report to the Commission. In addition, under the observation and review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), a full participation emergency preparedness exercise was conducted on October 12, 1989, and a remedial exercise on May 25, 1990. The FEMA report, which was issued on August 31, 1990, indicates that the two deficiencies identified during the October 1989 exercise were adequately resolved during the remedial exercise. FEMA stated that although progress has been made, some planning inadequacies remain and that FEMA is continuing to work with the Commonwealth and local jurisdictions to correct these planning inadequacies. A copy of the transmittal memorandum from FEMA to the NRC staff is enclosed, and the FEMA report is being provided to your staff.

On September 30, 1990, the NRC staff will provide the Commission a further update of the status of emergency preparedness at the Pilgrim site. In conjunction with the preparation of this update, members of the staff have met with local emergency planning officials, and a public meeting in the vicinity of the Pilgrim site has been scheduled to obtain views regarding the current status of emergency planning. This meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m., September 6, 1990, at the Sheraton Hotel in Plymouth, Massachusetts. A copy of the next status report on emergency preparedness at Pilgrim will be sent to you.

We believe the actions we are taking are appropriate to address the issues raised in the Inspector General's report.

Sincerely,


Forrest J. Remick
Acting Chairman

Enclosures:

1. 8/17/90 Memorandum to EDO
2. 8/31/90 Letter from FEMA
to NRC