



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 10, 1994

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510-0703

Dear Senator Lieberman:

I am responding to the letter you sent to Chairman Selin on March 17, 1994, in which you enclosed a letter from Mr. Ron Gavensky, an employee of Northeast Utilities at the Haddam Neck Plant and at Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Units 1, 2, and 3.

Our Region I office is aware of Mr. Gavensky's concerns, which he made known to that office directly and also through his March 5, 1993, filing with the Department of Labor alleging harassment and intimidation by his employer. He also filed a petition with the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation on March 3, 1994, that the licenses of Northeast Utilities be temporarily revoked until such time as an investigation into [his] allegations was made. We are treating that request as a petition under the provisions of Section 2.206 of Title 10 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations.

Our review of Mr. Gavensky's technical concerns is continuing and is currently tracked in our Allegation Management System. Technical concerns he previously raised in April and June 1992 regarding reactor vessel head studs and bolting materials purchased by Stone and Webster Engineering Corporation (SWEC) during the construction of Millstone Unit 3 that were left over and transferred to stores were resolved as discussed below. In addition, Mr. Gavensky was informed of our efforts in resolving these concerns in a letter dated March 30, 1993; a copy of that letter and its supporting attachments are enclosed.

Mr. Gavensky's technical concerns raised with the NRC fall into three categories: quality of reactor vessel head studs, adequacy of bolting materials, and adequacy of procurement. They are discussed in turn below.

Our review of the reactor vessel head studs showed that Northeast Utilities had identified nonconforming conditions before installation and had generated five nonconformance reports documenting those deficiencies. Northeast Utilities had properly evaluated the deficiencies and had determined that the studs were acceptable for use as is.

Northeast Utilities' testing of samples of the bolting materials left over from Unit 3 construction indicated that although visual deficiencies in the bolting materials existed, none would have adversely affected the capability of the materials to perform their design function. In September 1993, after subsequent questions by Mr. Gavensky, we revisited the bolting materials issues by independently testing the physical and material properties of a number of bolting materials about which Mr. Gavensky had raised concerns and which a Northeast Utilities' contractor had tested before March 30, 1993. Those independent test results indicate that although some of the bolting materials reviewed had visual deficiencies, all but one met materials specifications for chemical and tensile properties. The one deficient fastener would have been expected to perform satisfactorily in service given

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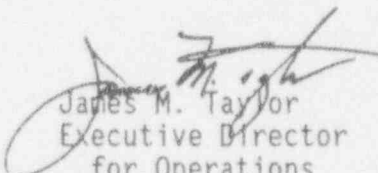
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the large factor of safety typically provided in bolting installations. Additional testing of another sample of bolting materials, acquired by our inspectors in November 1993, which are representative of those procured for use at Millstone, is nearing completion under a contract with the Brookhaven National Laboratory.

Finally, with respect the adequacy of procurement, the NRC did identify weaknesses in the 1987 receipt inspection program, principally at Unit 3. Northeast Utilities then reexamined SWEC's program for establishing purchase order and receipt inspection requirements. The NRC concluded in a subsequent inspection report that Northeast Utilities' current receipt inspection program is deliberate and controlled and consistent in the choice of required attributes and documentation of the result. For this reason and because no actual failures of SWEC parts have been reported, the NRC considers the safety consequences of the 1987 receipt inspection program weaknesses to be minimal. The NRC also conducted a preliminary review of the procurement program at Millstone in December 1993 (see applicable parts of NRC Inspection Report 50-423/93-26, enclosed) and an additional inspection in January 1994 (see applicable parts of NRC Inspection Report 50-423/94-01, enclosed). Although our inspections to date have identified some deficiencies in the licensee's procurement program, they do not affect safe operation of the plants. A followup review of both the Millstone and Haddam Neck receipt inspection programs is being considered to resolve Mr. Gavensky's remaining technical concerns.

Be assured that we will continue to pursue the resolution of these concerns on a schedule consistent with their safety significance and we will monitor the progress of his harassment and intimidation case currently before the Department of Labor (DOL). On the basis of the future inspection findings and DOL determinations, we will determine the need for any future NRC action or investigation of this matter.

Sincerely,

  
James M. Taylor  
Executive Director  
for Operations

Enclosures:

1. Letter of March 30, 1993 to Mr. Gavensky, w/attachments
2. NRC Inspection Report 50-423/93-26
3. NRC Inspection Report 50-423/94-01

May 10, 1994

"This correspondence addresses policy issues previously resolved by the Commission, transmits factual information or restates Commission policy."

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