



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

December 28, 1990

The Honorable Lane Evans
Member, United States House
of Representatives
1535 47th Avenue, #5
Moline, IL 61265

Dear Congressman Evans:

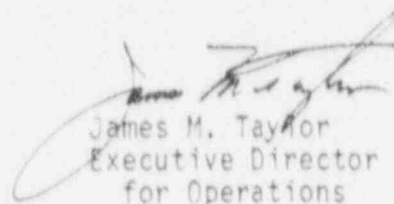
I am responding to your letter dated November 24 to Mr. Dennis K. Rathbun, Director, Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), in which you had enclosed a letter from Ms. Diane M. Smith, one of your constituents. In her letter, Ms. Smith supported a proposed rule on the Emergency Response Data System (ERDS) that was published recently by the NRC for public comment. She also raised concern about the security of the ERDS against terrorism.

The proposed rule requires operating nuclear power reactor licensees to participate in the ERDS program which will provide a direct electronic link between a reactor site and the NRC Operations Center. In the event of an emergency, the licensee will transmit critical plant information to the NRC Operations Center via ERDS. By supplementing the existing Emergency Notification System (ENS) which principally uses the telephones lines, the NRC will substantially improve its data gathering process during an emergency. The timely and accurate information thus received will allow the NRC to more effectively fulfill its response role during an emergency. It is expected this action will also allow the licensee to more effectively and efficiently utilize its time and resources in the management and operational aspects of the emergency.

Ms. Smith's concern about the security of the NRC-furnished communications link hardware against terrorism is well taken. NRC is currently reviewing its security requirements, not only for ERDS, but for all NRC emergency telecommunications. The results of this security review along with the comments received on the proposed ERDS rule, including those of Ms. Smith, will be addressed as the final ERDS rule is developed. We appreciate Ms. Smith's comments and suggestions and the support she expressed for the ERDS rulemaking.

I trust that the above information is responsive to your request.

Sincerely,


James M. Taylor
Executive Director
for Operations

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