

MAY 21 1984

The Honorable Robert S. Walker
 United States House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Walker:

This is in reply to your letter of April 9, 1984 to Mr. Carlton Karmnerer, NRC Congressional Affairs, which enclosed a letter from one of your constituents, Mr. Bernard Wolf, expressing concern about the operation of the Limerick Generating Station. The enclosed information is provided so that you can respond to his concerns. If we can be of further assistance, please advise us.

Sincerely,

(Signed) T. A. Rehm

for
 William J. Dircks
 Executive Director
 for Operations

Enclosure:
 As stated

Distribution:

H. Denton	R. Keimig
R. DeYoung	E. Conner
G. Cunningham	J. Wiggins
W. J. Dircks	R. Bellamy
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T. Rehm	Docket Nos. 50-352/50-353
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EDO 14378	Public Document Room (PDR)
SECY 84-0444	Region I Docket Room
OCA	

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 PDR COMMS NRCC
 CORRESPONDENCE PDR

Revised in OEDO - See previous concurrence

OFFICE ▶	RI	RI	RI	RI	EDO	OCA
SURNAME ▶	Conner/dec	Keimig	Allan	Murley	WJ Dircks	<i>[Signature]</i>
DATE ▶	5/16/84*	5/16/84*	5/16/84*	5/16/84*	5/18/84	5/21/84

Distribution

- H. Denton →
- R. DeYoung
- G. Cunningham
- ~~C. Kammerer~~

*WS Dircks
J Loe
T Behm*

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RI:DPRP

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RI:DETP

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RI:DRA

RI:RA

Conner/meo

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Bellamy

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Allan

Murley

5/16/84

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United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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~~me.~~
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Sincerely,

William J. Dircks
Executive Director for
Operations

Enclosure: As Stated

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,end

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05/16/84

ENCLOSURE

With regard to the continual exposure of persons to low levels of radiation in the vicinity of nuclear power plants, federal regulations set limits on permissible releases from such facilities during normal operation. Furthermore, instruments to measure radioactivity are required by the NRC to (1) monitor waste treatment systems at the plant before releases occur, (2) monitor the routine releases as they occur and, (3) monitor the offsite environs to measure the radiation levels resulting from natural background and plant effluents. Consequently, programs are in place at every licensed reactor plant to control, measure and monitor releases of radioactive liquid and gases. Units of measurement associated with radiation are expressed in terms of REM per unit of time. Low levels of radiation are measured in millirem (mrem) per unit of time. To provide some perspective, natural background levels in the U.S. vary considerably - from 70-310 mrem/yr. The measured natural background radiation dose in the vicinity of the Limerick site is about 120 mrem/yr. Natural background radiation is primarily from cosmic rays interacting with the outer layers of the earth's atmosphere and from radioactivity in the earth's crust. Variations are due primarily to the locations involved. Natural background is greater at high elevations where there is less attenuation by the earth's atmosphere from cosmic radiation. Similarly, there are locations which have larger deposits of radioactive materials (e.g., primordial uranium) in the earth's crust.

The NRC regulations that specifically address effluents from nuclear power plants during routine operation can be found in 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix I. These regulations require that reactors be designed so that the annual radiation dose to an individual located offsite does not exceed 5 mrem to the whole body from gaseous releases of radioactivity. Similarly, the annual radiation dose from liquid releases is set at 3 mrem. The Limerick facility must conform to these design criteria. These exposure levels are very small in comparison to those of natural background and result in negligible adverse human health impacts.

With regard to the economic factors mentioned by your constituent, the design life of the Limerick units, and most other nuclear power plants, is 40 years; not 20-25 years as stated. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, rather than the NRC, controls the capital cost recovery for all electric generating plants; therefore, this concern should be addressed to them if more information is required.

In regard to mitigating the adverse effects of severe accidents, there are systems and design features included in the plant design. In addition to the plant systems and procedures, emergency planning by both the licensee-operator and the local and State government is needed to assure that, even in the event of accidents involving release of radioactivity, protective measures can be taken for the general public. In this regard, the federal government has conducted technical studies that were used as a basis in establishing a 10 mile emergency planning zone (EPZ) around each nuclear plant. Within this EPZ there is a need to quickly alert the populace to a potential problem. Most facilities rely on sirens to perform such notification. However, discussions among the licensee, local and State officials

determine the type of warning system to be used. In the case of Limerick, we are aware that there is litigation at the State level between local residents and the licensee relative to the appropriateness of the placement and siting of sirens. In this regard, State issues of rights-of-way, easements and local zoning laws would govern. With respect to NRC licensing, the appointed Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) has before it the question of adequacy of the offsite emergency plan. The ASLB proceedings are a public forum and have local citizen participation in this matter.

As part of the initial licensing process, and periodically thereafter, the emergency plans are required to be tested as part of a field exercise. There is planned for July 25, 1984, an Emergency Exercise at Limerick to test the response of the utility, state and local agencies to an accident at the Limerick plant. The Emergency Exercise includes the participation of a large staff of observers, evaluators, and participants from the licensee, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), and local governments. During the exercise, numerous observers, selected in accordance with their technical background and experience, will make evaluations. After the exercise, critiques in a public forum will follow and reports issued. FEMA Region III (Philadelphia) has the responsibility for the review of offsite emergency preparedness activities, and also the responsibility to observe proposed tests of the evacuation procedures. NRC staff have similar responsibilities for the onsite portions of the exercise. After receiving a report from FEMA, the NRC will determine the overall adequacy of the utility's response capabilities, taking into consideration the performance of all involved emergency response organizations to demonstrate their ability to adequately protect the health and safety of the public.

FROM: Rep. Robert S. Walker		ACTION CONTROL	DATES	CONTROL NO.
		COMPL DEADLINE	5/11/84	14378
		INTERIM REPLY		DATE OF DOCUMENT
				4/9/84
TO: Kammerer		FINAL REPLY	<i>5/Reply for De</i>	PREPARE FOR SIGNATURE OF
		FILE LOCATION	<i>5/21/84</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> CHAIRMAN
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
				OTHER _____
DESCRIPTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LETTER <input type="checkbox"/> MEMO <input type="checkbox"/> REPORT <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER		SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS OR REMARKS		
Encloses ltr fm Bernard Wolf concerning Limerick #1778 plant		Return incoming with reply.		
ASSIGNED TO	DATE	INFORMATION ROUTING		
Murley, RI	4/25/84	Denton DeYoung GCunningham		

SECY-84-0444

NRC FORM 232
(9-80)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS
PRINCIPAL CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL

CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

Rep Robert S. Walker

NUMBER: 84-0444

LOGGING DATE: 4/24/84

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

ACTION OFFICE: EDO
 AUTHOR: Rep Robert S. Walker, Const Ref
 AFFILIATION: Bernard Wolf''
 LETTER DATE: 4/9/84 FILE CODE:
 ADDRESSEE: OCA
 SUBJECT: Opposes the opening of the Limerick plant
 ACTION: Direct Reply..Suspense: May 3
 DISTRIBUTION: OCA to Ack
 SPECIAL HANDLING: None
 SIGNATURE DATE:

Rec'd Off. EDO
 Date: 4-25-84
 Time: 2:00

FOR THE COMMISSION: **billie**