

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

June 9, 1971

Memo For Mr. Roger S. Boyd

Roger:

Attached is a draft Air Force letter intended for Mr. Price concerning the resumption of flying on the interim Bayshore route about July 1, 1971. I have also enclosed a copy of Mr. Campbell's latest letter to the Air Force. I believe that you already have all of the other documentation mentioned in the draft letter.

*CHARLIE*

C.R. Mac Vean

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Mr. Harold L. Price  
Director of Regulation  
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission  
Washington, D. C. 20545

Dear Mr. Price:

Following the April 6, 1971 meeting concerning the Strategic Air Command proposed low altitude training route near the nuclear power plant at Big Rock Point, Michigan, the Air Force prepared an analysis of flight statistics in order to assess the risks associated with operations over the proposed route. The analysis (Attachment 1) is based on SAC experience in low level training operations on all low altitude routes during the period 1963 - 1970 including the January 7, 1971 B-52 crash in Lake Michigan. The analysis considers operations on the proposed eight nautical mile wide training bomb run corridor, the centerline of which will be approximately five and one-half nautical miles to the east of the Big Rock Point Nuclear Plant. With the anticipation that approximately 2200 low altitude training flights will be conducted along this route during an operational year, the following key facts emerged from the analysis:

- a. The probability that a B-52 would stray from the bomb run corridor and overfly any part of an area enclosed by a 1.5 nautical mile radius circle centered on the Big Rock Point Plant is calculated as  $1.2 \times 10^{-6}$ , or about one in a million.
- b. The probability that, during an operational year, any B-52 would deviate from the corridor, overfly a part of the three nautical mile diameter circle centered on the plant, and crash within that circle is

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less than 1.5 in ten billion. The probability that such a crash within the circle would result in damage to the plant or injury to the employees is, of course, much smaller.

The results of this analysis, as well as the Air Force's plans to initiate training flights on the alternate route in the near future were provided to the Consumers Power Company on May 19, 1971 (Attachment 2) in response to their letter of April 12, 1971 (Attachment 3). Mr. James H. Campbell, President, Consumers Power Company, in his letter of June 3, 1971 (Attachment 4) indicated his concurrence in the Air Force's proposal to conduct operations on the alternate route on an interim basis. The necessary coordination and publication of the revised route in the appropriate flight planning documents is now underway. It is our estimate that SAC will be ready to initiate training on the revised route about July 1, 1971. It is the Air Force's intent to approve the opening of the revised Bayshore route at that time.

Attachments (4)

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