



CHAIRMAN

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

July 29, 2020

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your June 23, 2020, letter requesting that the NRC provide additional information to the public about the May 29, 2020 and June 6, 2020, manual trip events at Seabrook Station which resulted from unexpected control rod insertions. Additionally, you asked that the NRC staff provide a briefing to your staff detailing the steps being taken to ensure that this issue is corrected.

In response to the manual trip events, the NRC resident inspectors and regional staff conducted a comprehensive review of the licensee's actions to respond to and address the causes of these events. Specifically, the resident inspectors provided onsite agency oversight of the licensee's actions and assessed plant and operator performance. These efforts included additional inspection with support of NRC specialists to confirm that the licensee's corrective actions were adequate to support Seabrook's return to safe operation. Following these actions, the NRC staff determined that both manual trip events were of low safety significance and did not have any adverse impact on public health and safety.

On July 1, 2020, the NRC staff held a telephone briefing with your staff to discuss the NRC's oversight on the manual trip events with a focus on the licensee's response. This discussion included information related to the adequacy of the licensee's corrective actions, given the repetitive nature of the events; its use of vendor support; and the scope of testing and investigation to identify and correct the cause of the manual trip events.

The results of the NRC's oversight efforts, including our initial assessment of plant equipment and operator performance, will be finalized as part of the 2020 second-quarter inspection report, which is expected to be made publicly available by mid-August. Additionally, the NRC staff expects to complete a more detailed problem identification and resolution inspection in late August/early September. This inspection will include a focused review of the licensee's short- and long-term corrective actions. The results from this inspection will be documented in the 2020 third-quarter inspection report, which is expected to be made publicly available in early November. These inspection reports will provide the public with detailed information regarding the manual trip events.

I appreciate your interest in these matters. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or have your staff contact Eugene Dacus, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at (301) 415-1776.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Svinicki', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kristine L. Svinicki

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Pappas
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515