



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

January 28, 1999

CHAIRMAN

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In the FY 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, House Report 105-581, the Committee stressed the importance of license renewal for operating power reactors and directed the Commission to issue guidance by December 1998 to ensure that the regulatory framework for license renewal is readily understandable and timely.

I directed the Executive Council to provide overall oversight of the license renewal process to ensure the adequacy of resources and timely surfacing of any policy issues for Commission decision. In June 1998, the NRC staff issued procedures for conducting the license renewal reviews (Office Letter 805) and established a steering committee to monitor implementation of those procedures. At that time, the steering committee met with the industry working group on license renewal and discussed the regulatory framework that had been established to ensure the timely review of the license renewal applications, while continuing to develop technical and process improvements. The NRC has received two applications for renewing operating licenses for the Calvert Cliffs and Oconee nuclear power plants, and has established aggressive review schedules for both applications.

Subsequently, the Commission published a revised policy statement on the conduct of adjudicatory proceedings on August 5, 1998 (63 FR 41872), which described the Commission's expectations regarding the conduct of fair and timely hearings, particularly as they relate to license renewal applications. On August 19, 1998, and September 15, 1998, respectively, in the Calvert Cliffs and Oconee hearing proceedings, the Commission established an adjudicatory schedule aimed at completing the license renewal process in 30-36 months, defined the scope of the proceedings, and guided discovery management.

The steering committee and NRC staff conduct frequent public meetings with industry and the two applicants to discuss the progress on the two applications and related technical and process experience. The feedback thus far from the industry and applicants has been positive. We will continue to monitor the progress of this program very carefully to ensure continued improvements in the efficiency, effectiveness, clarity, and timeliness of the license renewal process.

Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson

cc: Senator Harry Reid

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CORRESPONDENCE PDR



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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-00J1

January 28, 1999

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The Honorable Ron Packard, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson

cc: Representative Peter J. Visclosky

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The Honorable Joseph M. McDade
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
United States House
of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

IDENTICAL LTR SENT TO
Senator Pete V. Domenici

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Sincerely,

Shirley Ann Jackson

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cc: Representative Vic Fazio

Distribution: See next page

*See previous concurrences

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