



FOI/WFA REQUEST

Case No: 99-264
 Date Recd: 6-24-99
 Action Off: BK ALW
 Related Case: _____

Nuclear Information and Resource Service

1424 16th St. NW, Suite 404, Washington, DC 20036, 202-328-0002, fax:202-452-2183; e-mail:nirsnet@igc.epc.org web:www.nirs.org

June 23, 1999

Russel Powell, Chief
 FOIA-LPDR Branch
 Division of Freedom of Information and Publication Services
 Office of Administration
 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 Washington, DC 20036

BY FAX: (301) 415-5130

Dear Mr. Powell:

On behalf of Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS), and pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(b), et. seq., I hereby request that you make available copies of all documents in the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's possession, which describe or discuss:

- 1) All communications between NRC Headquarters and Region III involving Ross Landsman and NRC staff under his supervision and all communications in their possession to and from Consumers Power pertaining or relevant to the June 9, 1999 hydrogen burn events at Palisades nuclear power station during the welding of the structural shield lid for VSC-24 Cask #15 as outlined in PNO-III-99-031
- 2) All communication between NRC Headquarters and Region III involving Bruce Jorgensen and NRC staff under his supervision and all communications in their possession to and from Consumers Power pertaining or relevant to the June 9, 1999 hydrogen burn events at Palisades nuclear power station during the welding of the structural shield lid for VSC-24 Cask # 15 as outlined in PNO-III-99-031
- 3) All communications between NRC Headquarters and Region III involving Roy Canisano and NRC staff under his supervision and all communications in their possession to and from Consumers Power pertaining or relevant to the June 9, 1999 hydrogen burn events at Palisades nuclear power station during the welding of the structural shield lid for VSC-24 Cask #15 as outlined in PNO-III-99-031

This request covers but is not limited to all draft and final reports, correspondence, memoranda, notes, records of telephone contacts, electronic communications including fax transmissions and Email, or other written records, whether in paper or computer files.

Pursuant to this request, please provide all documents and communications prepared or utilized by, in the possession of, or routed through the NRC related to items 1-3.

For any portion of the request that you deem appropriate to deny, NIRS requests that you describe the information that is denied, identify the exception to the FOIA on which you rely, and explain how that exception applies to the withheld information.

Pursuant to NRC regulations at 10 CFR 9.41, NIRS requests that any searching and copying fees incurred as a result of this search be waived, and provides the following information in response to the eight criteria listed in Section 9.41(b):

1) Purpose of request:

The purpose of the request is to gather information on the extent of knowledge, oversight, and follow-up exhibited and acquired by NRC staff as pertains to repeated hydrogen gas burns occurring during welding operations for VSC-24 Cask #15 at Palisades nuclear power station. The requested information is currently not available in the NRC's Public Document Room.

2) Extent to which NIRS will extract and analyze the substantive content of the records:

NIRS is qualified to make use of the requested information. The staff has demonstrated the ability to interpret information and communicate that information in a form comprehensible to the general public. Members of the NIRS staff have published articles in such national journals as The Progressive, The Nation, Nuclear Times, Newsday and Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. NIRS is quoted as a reliable source of information on nuclear issues in newspapers across the country, including the The Detroit News/Free Press, New York Times, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Washington Post, and The San Francisco Chronicle.

NIRS has a working relationship with attorneys, physicists, nuclear engineers, medical doctors, and other respected professionals who contribute to the full understanding of technical records and public health and safety issues.

3) Nature of the specific activity or research in which the records will be used and NIRS's qualifications to utilize the information for the intended use in such a way that it will contribute to public understanding:

NIRS seeks the requested information solely to contribute to and help shape the public debate on adequate worker, public health and safety relating to interim storage of high level nuclear waste. NIRS intends to use the information in order to advance the concerns for public understanding and safety.

4) Likely impact on the public's understanding of the subject as compared to the level of understanding of the subject prior to disclosure:

NIRS seeks to translate the requested information into the layperson's understanding of dry cask loading procedures at nuclear power stations. The added attention will increase the public understanding and further a national debate on interim dry cask storage standards and administrative controls.

5) Size and nature of the public to whose understanding a contribution will be made:

NIRS has an active subscribing membership of over 1500 throughout the United States. Several thousand additional members periodically receive mailings from NIRS. NIRS provides resource material to electronic and print media outlets with very broad outreach to a safety and environmentally conscious audience. Additionally, NIRS has a web site (www.nirsnet.org) which receives on average of 250-300 visitors per day where postings on this issue will be made available.

6) Means of distribution of the requested information:

NIRS will use its own newsletter publication The Nuclear Monitor and our media contacts in both the electronic and print media outlets to provide very broad outreach to the safety conscious public. Additionally, NIRS will post information on its web site (www.nirsnet.org) which receives on average of 250-300 visitors per day.

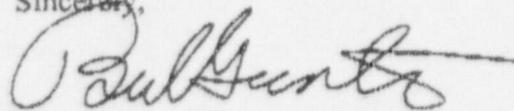
7) Whether free access to information will be provided:

NIRS will provide the information without charge to all members of the public. Information prepared from the FOIA requested will be posted on the web site for downloading free of charge. NIRS will also provide information to traditional media outlets without charge.

8) No commercial interest by NIRS or any other party:

NIRS has no commercial interest in obtaining the requested information. This information is provided to all public requests without charge. The sole interest of NIRS is to promote a policy debate on appropriate and adequate dry cask loading procedures at nuclear power stations for the sake of public health and safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Gunter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned directly below the word "Sincerely,".

Paul Gunter, Director
Reactor Watchdog Project