



State of Louisiana

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

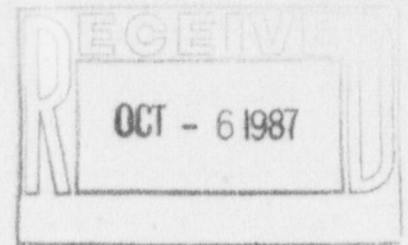
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October 2, 1987

Robert D. Martin, Regional Administrator
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region IV
611 Ryan Plaza Drive, Suite 1000
Arlington, Texas 76011

Dear Mr. Martin:

Re: 99990004/87-01

In reply to your letter dated September 1, 1987, relative to the Nuclear Energy Division's compliance with terms of the NRC/State of Louisiana Environmental Monitoring Cooperative Agreement for monitoring in the vicinity of Waterford 3 Steam Electric Station and River Bend Station, it appears that the appraisal is not totally factual and has some inaccuracy in assessing the Division's performance during the period of the evaluation. Some statements are made which need to be questioned and challenged.

In **Section 4** entitled, "Management Support," the statement, "The state no longer conducts a separate state environmental monitoring program around WFS and RBS that would be in addition to the samples and analyses required by the cooperative agreement." is essentially true; however, it is also true that the NRC does not have a separate monitoring program. What has happened, the two have gradually migrated to become the same program over the past few years, due to recommendations from NRC staff to **drop** additional monitoring in order to fulfill contract obligations within the Division's budget and personnel constraints. If we did not have the NRC/State cooperative agreement, we could expand our own program, reinstitute our own TLD measurement system, and still provide adequate coverage. The terms of the agreement place constraints which are not needed to maintain an adequate program. For the reimbursement the state receives, I question the worth of the effort.

You correctly pointed out that additional monitoring not required under the contract is done on the west side of the Mississippi River in the vicinity of Grand Gulf Nuclear Station. In addition, to comply with cooperative agreement obligations previously described, it has been necessary to discontinue the Division's independent TLD monitoring network. This was a management decision. There are two TLD networks, and to continue our own system would not add very much to the data base. More importantly, it would require one additional trained person to operate the system. We have not been able to obtain additional personnel without working to the detriment of other aspects of the program which have a greater effect on the radiological health and safety of the general public.

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Under **Section 6**, "Staffing," we are looking into the feasibility of adding additional staff this fiscal year in the form of a sub-professional "technician" position to perform duties which do not require a professional, e.g., sample collection, sample preparation, maintenance of air samplers, etc. A request for such a position has been included in next fiscal year's budget request.

As indicated in **Section 8**, "Training," there appears to have been a lack of formal off-site training. I am pleased to report that the laboratory "technician" mentioned in your letter has just concluded two weeks of on-site training at Canberra in Meriden, Connecticut, which will help this professional make better use of the equipment available to her.

Progress is being made in providing laboratory procedures "... in a standard laboratory format. . . ." as stated under **Section 9**, "Procedures." Please note that procedures have been available and in use for some time, but perhaps not in the exact NRC laboratory format.

Under **Section 10**, "Quality Assurance Program," the matter is again one of routinely performing appropriate paperwork, and this is **now** being done, complete with charts.

Rather than replying to each item under **Section 11**, "Cooperative Agreement Required Sample Collections and Analyses," I shall address those that require clarification or other explanation. There is a generic item in this section pertaining to our relationship with your licensee, over which we have no regulatory control. Some of the so-called "deficiencies" have come about due to the failure of your licensee to provide data we need, either timely or in the requisite form. In some cases, this has resulted in delayed reports, to be discussed in the next section. There were some notations that "State representatives offered no explanation as to the missing samples." In discussing this with staff, it appears that there has been miscommunication between staff and your representative. For example, it is difficult to collect milk samples if there are no dairy herds in the area. What we will attempt to do in such a case is to collect and analyze additional vegetation samples in the vicinity. If additional explanation is needed, we shall be pleased to provide it in detail. The bottom line is that we believe that adequate action has been taken to preclude the same things from happening in future evaluation periods. Additionally, the laboratory staffs of the two licensees have agreed to provide us with information in the form we need, in a timely manner, to comply with the terms of the agreement.

With regard to **Section 12**, "Reports," the facts are essentially as stated. Since Dr. Nicholas was out of the office during the first week of September, the 1986 reports for Waterford 3 and River Bend were hand-carried to your offices by Mr. Jerry Everett, of your staff, during that week. One reason for the delay is, our staff has been waiting to institute some new computer software to eliminate some of the tedious hand-transfer of data (which could introduce error). Due to problems in procurement, this did not arrive in time, and the manual method had to be used. We would prefer to see the deadline for submitting our reports set for 90-days after your licensee provides the data we need to prepare the report. Alternatively, if renegotiation of the agreement is discussed, we may request a 30-day extension of the deadline for submission.

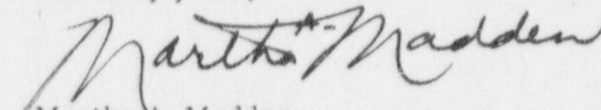
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I feel that the discrepancies which are in our control to correct have been adequately addressed. However, the report tends to take things out of context, and that is unfortunate. It might appear that the state has taken a lackadaisical attitude toward our monitoring program and that it is seriously lacking; that is not true. Our program is more than adequate to protect the public health and safety, and the environment. Therefore, I should like to suggest that you review the report to see if it can be made to more accurately reflect the efforts of this state agency.

Those items which I have not specifically addressed appear to either be generic or require no comment. I am confident your evaluator will be pleased with the progress we shall have made by the time of his next visit in 1988, and we are dedicated to seeing that this is the case. Prior to the next contract renegotiation, we shall review whether we desire to continue this cooperative agreement.

Should you require additional information or clarification, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,


Martha A. Madden
Secretary

MAM/whs

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