

50-271



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

July 9, 1998

Mr. Gregory A. Maret  
Director of Operations  
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation  
185 Old Ferry Road  
Brattleboro, VT 05301

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING ISSUES RAISED  
BY THE 10 CFR 2.206 PETITION DATED MAY 27, 1998, FROM THE CITIZENS  
AWARENESS NETWORK, INC. (TAC NO. MA1964)

Dear Mr. Maret:

By Petition dated May 27, 1998, as supplemented on June 9, 1998, both enclosed, the Citizens Awareness Network, Inc (CAN or Petitioner) requested that the NRC take immediate enforcement action by suspending the operating license for the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station, operated by the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation, until the entire facility has been subjected to an independent safety analysis review similar to the one conducted at the Maine Yankee Atomic Power Station. As an alternative, the Petitioner requests that the NRC immediately act to modify the operating license for the facility by requiring that, before restart (1) Vermont Yankee management certify under oath that all backup safety systems and all security systems are fully operable, and that all safety systems and security systems meet and comply with NRC requirements; (2) Vermont Yankee be held to compliance with all of the restart criteria and protocols in the NRC [Inspection] Manual; (3) Vermont Yankee only be allowed to resume operations after the NRC has conducted a "vertical slice" examination of the degree to which the new design basis documents (DBDs) and Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR) accurately describe at least two of the primary safety systems for the Vermont Yankee reactor; (4) once operation resumes, Vermont Yankee only be allowed to continue operation for as long as it adheres to its schedule for coming into compliance and completing the DBD and FSAR project; and (5) the NRC holds a public hearing before restart to discuss the changes to the torus, Vermont Yankee DBD and FSAR projects, and Vermont Yankee's scheduled completion of these projects in relation to operational safety.

In support of these requests, the Petitioner raised concerns about the operation of the Vermont Yankee facility, including challenges to the single-failure criterion, inadequate safety evaluations, potential overreliance on Yankee Atomic Electric Company analyses, an inadequate operational experience review program, high potential for other serious safety problems, and lack of adequate perimeter security. The Petitioner also attached four documents prepared by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). One UCS document, dated May 14, 1998, provided a review of Vermont Yankee Daily Event Reports (DERs) made over the previous year as requested by CAN. Another UCS document, dated January 29, 1998, was addressed to the NRC Region I Senior Allegation Coordinator; it discussed a specific concern with NRC Daily Event Report 33545 of January 15, 1998, associated with Vermont Yankee

DF01

waterhammer effects on certain systems. The third document, a UCS letter dated May 5, 1997, to the NRC Chairman and Commissioners, discussed mislocated fuel bundle loading errors. The final UCS document attached was titled "Potential Nuclear Safety Hazard Reactor Operation with Failed Fuel Cladding," dated April 2, 1998.

The Petitioner's request for immediate action to suspend or modify the operating license at Vermont Yankee was denied by letter dated July 6, 1998; however, we have not yet determined if the actions requested by the Petitioner should be taken. We are forwarding the enclosed Petition to you and we request that you address the concerns raised in the Petition (including the June 9 supplement) and address the need to perform the actions requested by CAN. Please address the requested actions and the supporting information including the ten points raised in support of the actions and the four enclosed documents with respect to your facility.

We request that you provide the information within 60 days of receipt of this letter. If you have any questions, please contact Richard Croteau at (301) 415-1475.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Cecil O. Thomas, Project Director  
Project Directorate I-3  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-271

- Enclosures: 1. Petition dated 5/28/98
- 2. Ltr to S. Jackson from J. Block dated 6/9/98

cc w/o enclosures: See next page

DISTRIBUTION

Docket File                    OGC  
PUBLIC                            ACRS  
PDI-3 r/f                        CHehl, RI  
JZwolinski  
RCroteau  
TClark

NAME: G:\CROTEAU\MA1964.RAI

To receive a copy of this document, indicate in the box: "C" = Copy without attachment/enclosure "E" = Copy with attachment/enclosure "N" = No copy

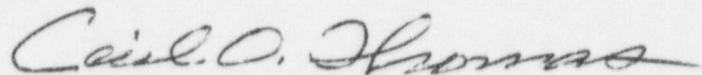
OFFICE	PDI-3/PM	PDI-3/LA	PDI-3/D
NAME	RCroteau	TClark	CThomas
DATE	7/10/98	7/18/98	7/19/98

waterhammer effects on certain systems. The third document, a UCS letter dated May 5, 1997, to the NRC Chairman and Commissioners, discussed mislocated fuel bundle loading errors. The final UCS document attached was titled "Potential Nuclear Safety Hazard Reactor Operation with Failed Fuel Cladding," dated April 2, 1998.

The Petitioner's request for immediate action to suspend or modify the operating license at Vermont Yankee was denied by letter dated July 6, 1998; however, we have not yet determined if the actions requested by the Petitioner should be taken. We are forwarding the enclosed Petition to you and we request that you address the concerns raised in the Petition (including the June 9 supplement) and address the need to perform the actions requested by CAN. Please address the requested actions and the supporting information including the ten points raised in support of the actions and the four enclosed documents with respect to your facility.

We request that you provide the information within 60 days of receipt of this letter. If you have any questions, please contact Richard Croteau at (301) 415-1475.

Sincerely,



Cecil O. Thomas, Project Director  
Project Directorate I-3  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-271

Enclosures: 1. Petition dated 5/28/98  
2. Ltr to S. Jackson from  
J. Block dated 6/9/98

cc w/o enclosures: See next page

G. Maret

cc:

Regional Administrator, Region I  
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
475 Allendale Road  
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Mr. David R. Lewis  
Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge  
2300 N Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20037-1128

Mr. Richard P. Sedano, Commissioner  
Vermont Department of Public Service  
120 State Street, 3rd Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Public Service Board  
State of Vermont  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Chairman, Board of Selectmen  
Town of Vernon  
P.O. Box 116  
Vernon, VT 05354-0116

Mr. Richard E. McCullough  
Operating Experience Coordinator  
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station  
P.O. Box 157  
Governor Hunt Road  
Vernon, VT 05354

G. Dana Bisbee, Esq.  
Deputy Attorney General  
33 Capitol Street  
Concord, NH 03301-6937

Chief, Safety Unit  
Office of the Attorney General  
One Ashburton Place, 19th Floor  
Boston, MA 02108

Ms. Deborah B. Katz  
Box 83  
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

Mr. Raymond N. McCandless  
Vermont Division of Occupational  
and Radiological Health  
Administration Building  
Montpelier, VT 05602

Mr. Gautam Sen  
Licensing Manager  
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power  
Corporation  
185 Old Ferry Road  
Brattleboro, VT 05301

Resident Inspector  
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station  
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
P.O. Box 176  
Vernon, VT 05354

Mr. Peter LaPorte, Director  
ATTN: James Muckerheide  
Massachusetts Emergency Management  
Agency  
400 Worcester Rd.  
P.O. Box 1496  
Framingham, MA 01701-0317

Jonathan M. Block, Esq.  
Main Street  
P. O. Box 566  
Putney, VT 05346-0566

Mr. Michael J. Daley  
Trustee and Legislative Representative  
New England Coalition on Nuclear  
Pollution, Inc.  
Box 545  
Brattleboro, VT 05301