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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 21, 1998

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Mr. John Beck, President
Little Harbor Consultants, Inc.
Millstone ITPOP Project Office
P.O. Box 0630
Niantic, Connecticut 06357-0630

SUBJECT: LITTLE HARBOR CONSULTANTS, INC. OVERSIGHT OF NNECO
PROGRAMS FOR HANDLING EMPLOYEE CONCERNS (EVALUATION
REPORT NOS. 50-245/98-210, 50-336/98-210, 50-423/98-210)

Dear Mr. Beck:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) October 24, 1996, Order directed the licensee to retain an independent, third-party, to oversee Northeast Nuclear Energy Company's (NNECO's) implementation of its comprehensive plan to improve processes and programs for handling employee safety concerns. Following NRC's approval of Little Harbor Consultants, Inc. (LHC) as the third-party organization, NRC staff has conducted a number of activities related to the evaluation of LHC's oversight responsibility including participation in periodic meetings between LHC and NNECO, onsite monitoring of LHC implementation of its Oversight Plan, and review of LHC docketed information. During the period December 8-12, 1997 and January 5-9, 1998, a team from the NRC's Special Projects Office, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, in accordance with guidelines outlined in SECY-97-003, "Millstone Restart Review Process," performed an evaluation of the Employee Concerns Program and safety-conscious work environment at Millstone. While onsite for its evaluation, the team also evaluated LHC's oversight activities. The enclosed report presents the results of these evaluations.

Overall, LHC activities were found to be effective in implementing its Oversight Plan for monitoring and overseeing NNECO's efforts to correct and prevent the repetition of past failures in management processes and procedures for handling safety issues raised by employees, and in ensuring that employees who raise safety concerns are not discriminated against. Two weaknesses were identified: one concerned the level of detail provided in LHC's first quarterly report and the second involved the tracking of NNECO's responses to LHC's recommendations. Since the team's evaluation, LHC addressed both these weaknesses.

The team's evaluation of the Millstone Employee Concerns Program and the safety-conscious work environment are discussed in a separate report.

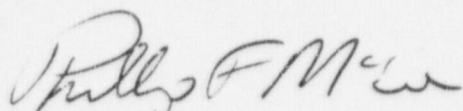
In accordance with Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 2.790(a), a copy of this letter and the enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

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If you have any questions concerning the enclosed evaluation report, please contact Helen N. Pastis at 301 415-1261.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Phillip F. McKee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Phillip" being more prominent than the last name "McKee".

Phillip F. McKee
Deputy Director for Licensing
Special Projects Office
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-245, 50-336, and 50-423

Enclosure: Evaluation Report 98-210

Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Units 1, 2, and 3

cc:

Lillian M. Cuoco, Esquire
Senior Nuclear Counsel
Northeast Utilities Service Company
P. O. Box 270
Hartford, CT 06141-0270

Mr. Kevin T. A. McCarthy, Director
Monitoring and Radiation Division
Department of Environmental
Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Mr. Allan Johanson, Assistant Director
Office of Policy and Management
Policy Development and Planning
Division
450 Capitol Avenue - MS 52ERN
P. O. Box 341441
Hartford, CT 06134-1441

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

First Selectmen
Town of Waterford
Hall of Records
200 Boston Post Road
Waterford, CT 06385

Mr. J. P. McElwain
Recovery Officer - Millstone Unit 1
Vice President (Acting) - Millstone Unit 3
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, CT 06385

Mr. Wayne D. Lanning
Deputy Director of Inspections
Special Projects Office
475 Allendale Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406-1415

Mr. F. C. Rothen
Vice President - Work Services
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
P.O. Box 128
Waterford, CT 06385

Charles Brinkman, Manager
Washington Nuclear Operations
ABB Combustion Engineering
12300 Twinbrook Pkwy, Suite 330
Rockville, MD 20852

Mr. D. M. Goebel
Vice President - Nuclear Oversight
Northeast Utilities Service Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, CT 06385

Senior Resident Inspector
Millstone Nuclear Power Station
c/o U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
P. O. Box 513
Niantic, CT 06357

Mr. David Amerine, Vice President
Nuclear Engineering and Support
Northeast Utilities Service Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, CT 06385

Mr. M. H. Brothers
Vice President - Operations
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, CT 06385

Mr. M. R. Scully, Executive Director
Connecticut Municipal Electric
Energy Cooperative
30 Stott Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360

Mr. William D. Meinert
Nuclear Engineer
Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale
Electric Company
P. O. Box 426
Ludlow, MA 01056

Ernest C. Hadley, Esq.
1040 B Main Street
P. O. Box 549
West Wareham, MA 02576

Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
Millstone Nuclear Power Station, Units 1, 2, and 3

cc:

Citizens Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Ms. Susan Perry Luxton
180 Great Neck Road
Waterford, CT 06385

The Honorable Terry Concannon
Nuclear Energy Advisory Council
Room 4035
Legislative Office Building
Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Mr. G. D. Hicks
Unit Director - Millstone Unit 3
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, Connecticut 06385

Little Harbor Consultants, Inc.
Millstone - ITPOP Project Office
P. O. Box 0630
Niantic, CT 06375-0630

Mr. Evan W. Woollacott
Co-Chair
Nuclear Energy Advisory Council
128 Terry's Plain Road
Simsbury, CT 06070

Mr. Daniel L. Curry
Project Director
Parsons Power Group Inc.
2675 Morgantown Road
Reading, PA 19607

Mr. Don Schopfer
Verification Team Manager
Sargent & Lundy
55 E. Monroe Street
Chicago, IL 60603

Mr. P. D. Hinnenkamp
Director - Unit Operations
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, Connecticut 06385

Mr. B. D. Kenyon
Chief Nuclear Officer - Millstone
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, Connecticut 06385

Deborah Katz, President
Citizens Awareness Network
P.O. Box 83
Shelburne Falls, MA 03170

Joseph R. Egan, Esq.
Egan & Associates, P.C.
2300 N Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20037

Mr. J. A. Price
Unit Director - Millstone Unit 2
Northeast Nuclear Energy Company
P. O. Box 128
Waterford, Connecticut 06385

Attorney Nicholas J. Scobbo, Jr.
Ferriter, Scobbo, Caruso, Rodophele, PC
1 Beacon Street, 11th Floor
Boston, MA 02108