



FEMA

November 16, 2021

James C. Stallings, Director
Georgia Emergency Management
and Homeland Security Agency
Post Office Box 18055
Atlanta, Georgia 30316-0055

Dear Mr. Stallings:

This is to inform you of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Region 4 office identification of a Level 1 Finding during the Edwin Hatch Nuclear Power Plant Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program (REPP) Exercise conducted on Wednesday, November 3, 2021.

A Level 1 Finding is defined in the FEMA REP Program Manual, dated December 2019, as an observed or identified inadequacy of organizational performance during an assessment activity that could cause a determination that offsite emergency preparedness is not adequate to provide reasonable assurance that appropriate protective measures can be taken in the event of a radiological emergency to protect the health and safety of the public living in the vicinity of a nuclear power plant.

The state of Georgia received a Level 1 Finding under the exercise objective Alert and Notification, Capability Target 3.2: Alert and Notification to the Public – Alert and notification of the public is completed in a timely manner. This adjudication was made after the Region 4 Regional Assistance Committee (RAC) Chairperson consulted with the region's voting RAC members on November 9, 2021 and received a majority vote of members present to proceed with the Level 1 Finding assessment. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 350.9(d), we have thoroughly reviewed and discussed these issues with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC).

During the exercise, the state of Georgia failed to activate the alert and notification system in response to a General Emergency declared by Hatch Nuclear Plant personnel to inform the public of the severity of the emergency. As a result, the state of Georgia has been assessed a Level 1 Finding. The failure to activate the alert and notification system, resulted in not alerting the public in the affected area of the severity of the incident and any potential protective actions necessary to take in a timely manner; hence, failing to protect the health and safety of the public living within the vicinity of the Hatch Nuclear Plant.

FEMA Region 4 contacted Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency staff on November 4, 2021 and informed them of the Level 1 Finding. This issue was discussed with your staff following the participant meeting on November 5, 2021; further discussions occurred on November 9, 2021. Following a thorough discussion of the circumstances regarding the Level 1 Finding, the U.S. NRC Region 2 has offered to provide refresher training for all program staff and key decision makers within your organization.

Because of the potential impact of Level 1 Findings on public health and safety, Appendix 1 to 44 C.F.R. Part 350 requires corrections to be fully documented within 120 days of identification. An offsite response organization (ORO) demonstrates correction(s) of Level 1 Findings identified through remedial actions, including exercises, drills, plan/procedure revisions, or other actions. Appropriate corrective actions and a remedial assessment activity involving the state will need to be conducted within 100 days after the November 3, 2021, exercise – no later than February 3, 2022. Should successful remediation occur within 75 days – no later than January 17, 2022 – FEMA will include the results and findings of the remedial action(s) in the final after-action report for the biennial exercise. Should successful remediation not be accomplished within 75 days, the RAC Chairperson will prepare a separate evaluation report of the remedial assessment activity within 30 days of said actions. A summary of the circumstances and outcome of the finding will be included in the Biennial Preparedness Report.

Within 20 days of the Biennial Exercise, the state may either propose a schedule for remedial actions or appeal *the issue classification* of a Level 1 Finding. The RAC Chairperson will consider the appeal and provide response within ten days of receipt – no later than December 3, 2021. If the appeal is denied, no extensions to the deadlines mentioned above will be provided and the appropriate corrective actions and a remedial assessment activity must be conducted no later than February 3, 2022.

Please coordinate with this office no later than November 23, 2021, regarding a schedule of corrective actions, including what corrective actions will be conducted, e.g., training and/or drills, along with the date, time, and identification of those organizations and participants by title, participating in the remedial assessment activity.

A copy of this letter has been forwarded to FEMA Headquarters, the U.S. NRC Headquarters, and the U.S. NRC Region 2.

Your cooperation in this matter is sincerely appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Wells, Regional Assistance Committee Chairperson, at (202) 702-7605.

Sincerely,



Gracia B. Szczech
Regional Administrator

cc: FEMA Headquarters
U.S. NRC Headquarters
U.S. NRC Region 2