



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

CHAIRMAN

August 23, 2022

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:


On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your July 6, 2022, letter regarding U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommendations about how the NRC can improve the security of radioactive materials. GAO has issued recommendations for the NRC to address the security of category 3 quantities of radioactive materials. As described below we are considering GAO recommendations in ongoing updates to our programs as appropriate.

In December 2021, based in part on prior GAO recommendations, the Commission approved the initiation of a rulemaking to require specific means for licensees to verify the licensing status of any entity seeking to receive category 3 quantities of radioactive materials. This verification will be conducted through either direct contact with the NRC or Agreement State regulator or through the NRC's online verification system. The Commission expects to receive the staff's draft proposed rule no later than October 2023. If approved, this rulemaking will address the central concern raised in the recent GAO report. The NRC staff also issued a communication to all NRC manufacturer and distributor licensees and Agreement State regulators to ensure they are aware of the issues raised by GAO and to remind them of ways to identify fraudulent licenses.

In addition, I chair the Radiation Source Protection and Security Task Force (Task Force), which is composed of 14 Federal agencies, as well as the Organization of Agreement States serving in an observer role. This Task Force has evaluated the security of radiation sources in the United States since its establishment following the 2005 Energy Policy Act. The Task Force's 2022 report concluded that there were no significant gaps in radioactive source protection and security that were not already being addressed through the efforts of the appropriate Task Force member agencies. This includes the NRC's ongoing radioactive source accountability rulemaking.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or have your staff contact Eugene Dacus, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at (301) 415-1776.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. T. Hanson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the "C" and a flourish at the end.

Christopher T. Hanson

cc: Ranking Member John Katko