

Mr. David A. Lochbaum
Nuclear Safety Engineer
Union of Concerned Scientists
1707 H Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20006-3919

March 16, 2001

Dear Mr. Lochbaum:

Thank you for your recent letter expressing interest in participating in emergency exercises. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is a signatory to the Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan (FRERP) and the Federal Response Plan (FRP). Responses to emergencies at NRC-licensed facilities are conducted in accordance with those plans, as supplemented by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with other Federal agencies that have critical capabilities such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Energy. Our emergency response exercises are conducted in accordance with those plans and with the active participation of other Federal agencies and State and local governmental entities which bear the responsibility for emergency response. While there is no provision for participation by organizations such as the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), the plans explicitly provide for extensive information exchange with the media and the general public.

I agree to your request of January 30, 2001, to meet with UCS to discuss emergency response exercises. Although there is no basis for participation by UCS in NRC emergency exercises, as described above, we can discuss how UCS and others can best avail themselves of the information that would be available to the media and the public in an emergency. Any suggestions concerning how NRC might improve its communications with the public are welcome.

NRC will be represented by members of the Offices of Incident Response Operations, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, and Public Affairs who are thoroughly familiar with the NRC Incident Response Program. We will contact you shortly to set up the meeting at NRC for a mutually agreeable date and time and will post a notice on the NRC web site (<http://www.nrc.gov>). If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact Mr. Joseph Himes, Incident Response Operations, at (301) 415-7564 or e-mail JEH1@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

William F. Kane
Deputy Executive Director
for Reactor Programs

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