



# Federal Emergency Management Agency

Washington, D.C. 20472

FEB 21 2001

Kathy Halvey Gibson  
Chief, Emergency Preparedness and  
Health Physics Section  
Operator Licensing, Human Performance, and  
Plant Support Branch  
Division of Inspection Program Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Ms. Gibson:

This is in response to your letter dated September 21, 2000, which forwarded a copy of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Event Inquiry regarding evacuation routes and English spoken as a second language by some residents in the emergency planning zone (EPZ) at the Indian Point 2 (IP2) site.

Mr. Robert F. Reynolds, the Regional Assistance Committee (RAC) Chair of FEMA Region II, has provided the enclosed document that reflects Region II's assessment of the evacuation routes and the segment of the population where English is spoken as a second language in the EPZ at IP2. We also acknowledged that these issues cannot be conclusively addressed until the official census figures are available for the State.

Based on the enclosed documentation, we support Region II's conclusion that the offsite radiological emergency response plans for the State of New York, and the affected local jurisdictions specific to the Indian Point site, can be implemented. Also, we find they are adequate to provide reasonable assurance to protect the health and safety of the public in the event of a radiological emergency at IP2.

I trust the enclosed documentation is responsive to your request for assistance in responding to the NRC OIG Event Inquiry. Please contact Pat Tenorio of my staff at (202) 646-2870, should you have questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Vanessa E. Quinn", is written over the typed name.

Vanessa E. Quinn, Chief  
Radiological Emergency Preparedness Branch  
Chemical and Radiological Preparedness Division

Enclosure



FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Region II

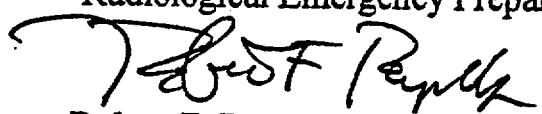
Jacob K. Javits Federal Building  
26 Federal Plaza, Room 1337  
New York, New York 10278-0002

R2-PT-TE

February 8, 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR: Vanessa E. Quinn, Chief  
Radiological Emergency Preparedness Branch

FROM:

  
Robert F. Reynolds, Chair  
Regional Assistance Committee

SUBJECT: Indian Point Evacuation Routes & English  
Spoken as a Second Language

This is in response to your memorandum of October 13, 2000 concerning a request for assistance from the NRC on this subject.

The NRC request is based upon a report prepared by the NRC Inspector General to review the response to an Alert at Indian Point 2, which occurred on February 15, 2000. The IG report states on page 28:

*"Several first responders expressed concerns to OIG that due to population density and the road conditions in the area, any failure to maintain the integrity of the evacuation routes would bring the "plan" to a complete stop. Additionally, within the certain sections of the EPZ there was a growing segment of the population where English is spoken as a second language. These concerns among others caused many of the officials interviewed to comment that it was critical that IP2 make immediate and accurate notifications to the appropriate off-site authorities in the event of an emergency at IP2. These officials considered this type of notification to be paramount in maintaining the public's safety."*

As you know, this office has repeatedly evaluated the capabilities of off-site officials to address a radiological emergency at Indian Point. The qualifying exercise for this site was held on March 3, 1982 and in the past nineteen years there have been an additional sixteen full-scale exercises. The most recent exercises were the Ingestion Pathway Exercise on May 25-27, 1999, and the Full-Participation Plume Pathway Exercise on November 15, 2000.

Each exercise has evaluated the off-site capability to protect and possibly evacuate the public. Based on the results of these exercises, it has been repeatedly determined that the offsite radiological emergency response plans for the State of New York, and the affected local jurisdictions specific to the Indian Point Site, can be implemented and are adequate to provide reasonable assurance that appropriate measures can be taken offsite to protect the health and safety of the public in the event of a radiological emergency at the site. The most recent certification of reasonable assurance was on February 28, 2000, via letter, from FEMA to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Headquarters and to NRC Region I.

Please note, the Radiological Emergency Plans for Indian Point include detailed procedures to implement an evacuation. In addition, roadway construction or maintenance along evacuation routes is reported to the risk county Emergency Operations Centers on an on-going basis so that traffic may be redirected in the event of an evacuation.

The New York State Emergency Management Office (NYSEMO), the risk counties and the utilities are currently preparing to update the Evacuation Time Estimates (ETE) for the Plume Exposure Pathway. The ETE details the total evacuation time required for evacuating a designated area. This task should be completed by approximately six months after official population figures are available from the 2000 Census.

As you know, FEMA Guidance Memorandum 20: "Foreign Language Translation of Public Education Brochures & Safety Messages" specifies public education materials should be translated into a foreign language if the population of voting age, that speaks English as a second language exceeds 5% of the overall county population. Preliminary results from the 2000 Census show an increase in populations speaking Spanish and Oriental languages as their primary language. This issue cannot be conclusively addressed until final population figures are available from the Bureau of Census. The State and local officials are aware of this development and are closely monitoring the situation.



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