

January 10, 2002

The Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2002 (Public Law 107-107) includes a requirement (section 1511) that the Secretary of Defense conduct a study on the appropriate role of the Department of Defense with respect to homeland security. In light of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) responsibilities for the oversight of security at civilian nuclear facilities, I am writing on behalf of the NRC to offer assistance and support to the Department in connection with this effort.

As you are aware, civilian nuclear facilities, principally including nuclear power plants, are among the critical infrastructure for which protection efforts from the Department of Defense have been sought in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. Although the NRC requires nuclear power plant licensees to maintain a strong physical security capability, the defensive assets at these civilian facilities are necessarily limited. As a result, we believe there will be a continuing need for the NRC to coordinate with the Department and the Joint Task Force Civil Support of the Joint Forces Command in combating terrorism. We are hopeful that NRC involvement in the study required by section 1511 might facilitate this effort.

We very much appreciate the support that we have received from the Department and look forward to a continuing close relationship. You or your staff may reach me at 301-415-1759 to discuss this matter further. We look forward to working with the Department on this effort.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Richard A. Meserve