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Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

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NRC CHAIRMAN DIRECTS STAFF PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF EXECUTION OF REACTOR OVERSIGHT PROCESS AT INDIAN POINT

ROCKVILLE – Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Dale Klein Wednesday directed the NRC staff to develop a plan for an independent review of agency Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) activities at the Indian Point nuclear power plant, and perhaps others.

In a memo to Executive Director for Operations Luis Reyes, Klein said the assessment should first be carried out at the Entergy-owned plant in Buchanan, N.Y. because of repeated inquiries about the adequacy of NRC oversight and licensee performance at the two-unit site. But, he added, such an assessment should be considered for “other facilities in other regions to the extent you believe appropriate.”

He also said that “consideration should also be given to any existing international programs already in place that might fulfil this assessment function.”

Referring specifically to Indian Point, Klein said that the agency’s staff in its Region I office at King of Prussia, Pa., “has been implementing heightened oversight of the facility, including inspections beyond those called for by the normal oversight process. ... Nevertheless, I believe that additional review of our actions would be beneficial.” He added that the team should also provide its insights into licensee performance.

Klein told Reyes that the assessment must “address overall programmatic implications for the reactor oversight process,” and added that the charter prepared for assessments should describe a team composed of members to achieve independence. Appropriate state, local and congressional observation roles should also be described.

Klein asked for a response for Commission review within 30 days.

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