

September 26, 2007

Mr. David Lochbaum
Director, Nuclear Safety Project
Union of Concerned Scientists
1707 H Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006-3919

Dear Mr. Lochbaum,

I am responding to your letter of September 4, 2007. I appreciate your comments regarding the availability of information prior to the August public meetings as well as your technical insights regarding the Construction Inspection Program.

First, we regret that some of the slides for the second day's presentations were unavailable for you and other members of the public to review prior to the presentations. The two-day workshop was held to discuss the Construction Assessment and Enforcement Program and the ITAAC Closure Process. The materials for those topics were published on August 14th and 15th via the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) and referenced on the meeting notice posted on our website. However, two other briefings, on ITAAC Prioritization and the Inspection Manual Chapters, were later added to the agenda at the request of stakeholders, with the intent of informing participants of NRC's activities in those areas. Although the content of those briefings were publicly available as a result of previous public meetings, such as the staff's presentation to the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) on July 11, 2007, the specific materials for those presentations on August 15th, were not available for review prior to the meeting. Regarding the ITAAC closure letter template examples, those documents had just been developed and provided by industry to the NRC and other workshop participants during the workshop for discussion during the second day's session. I have discussed this matter with my staff and reinforced our goal to make every effort to have materials available for public review as early as is appropriate.

Regarding your insights on the Construction Inspection Program, your comments will be considered as we continue to develop our program. As was stated during the meeting and emphasized in closing remarks, there will be several additional meetings in the future to discuss the suggestions by concerned parties as these processes are developed throughout 2008.

We thank you for participation in these meetings and look forward to working with you and other stakeholders in developing our inspection and assessment programs for the construction of the next generation of nuclear power plants.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Glenn M. Tracy, Director
Division of Construction Inspection
& Operational Program
Office of New Reactors

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