



DIRECTOR, NAVAL REACTORS

At Sea
Mid-Atlantic
May 6, 2013

Dear Chairman McFarlane,

I am writing from the submarine MINNESOTA (SSN 783), our tenth VIRGINIA-class submarine, which today successfully completed her initial sea trials. It was my privilege to see firsthand the capabilities of the Navy's newest ship and the professionalism and dedication of her crew during these trials. MINNESOTA, the cutting edge of our submarine force, is well on her way to fulfilling her mission and to making a lasting contribution to national security.

On these trials, the operation of the nuclear propulsion plant and the actions of the officers and crew were impeccable. During surface and submerged operations, we tested the ship's full range of maneuvering capabilities. We also operated MINNESOTA over the full range of her depth capability. Finally, we tested the ability to shut down and promptly restart her reactor at sea. In all of these trials, MINNESOTA performed superbly. When MINNESOTA joins the Fleet later this year, our Navy will have 55 nuclear-powered attack subs, 14 nuclear-powered ballistic-missile subs, 4 guided-missile subs, and 10 nuclear-powered aircraft carriers—for a total of 93 operating nuclear reactors aboard U.S. Navy combatants.

Throughout Naval Reactors' history of designing nuclear propulsion plants for warships, the NRC staff has played a key role in reviewing the safety posture of our designs. This cooperation has been instrumental to the Program's success and we are grateful for your support. I look forward to the continuing cooperation between our two organizations as we finish the safety analysis review for the CVN 78 aircraft carrier propulsion plant and the many projects ahead.

Very Respectfully,

J. M. Richardson
Admiral, U.S. Navy

The Honorable Alison M. McFarlane, Ph.D.
Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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*I look forward to
meeting you soon.*

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