

June 16, 2016

Mr. Jim Riccio
Greenpeace
702 H Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Riccio:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter of May 19, 2016 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System [ADAMS] Accession No. ML16141A760) regarding concerns expressed about the quality assurance problems at AREVA's Le Creusot Forge facility. In particular, the letter requested information about the following questions:

1. What components have been supplied to U.S. nuclear power plants (NPPs)?
2. How does the NRC intend to determine and verify the quality of these components?
3. Will the affected components meet the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Codes and Standards?
4. Does the NRC have any information on the quality of these components provided by AREVA that perhaps resides in the NRC's non-public version of ADAMS?

NRC's regulatory requirements pertinent to this issue are contained in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 21, "Reporting of Defects and Noncompliance." When an entity identifies issues that could be subject to 10 CFR Part 21 reporting responsibilities, the entity is required to implement its evaluation and reporting processes. The regulations require that users of a suspect component be informed so that a proper evaluation of the safety significance of the issue can be performed. Therefore, consistent with the 10 CFR Part 21 regulation, the vendor is required to notify licensees of potential issues so that the adequate evaluations can be conducted. Reporting of defects and non-compliances which could create a substantial safety hazard assures that the NRC receives prompt notification of such instances. Upon identification of a potential issue, a vendor must complete the evaluation within 60 days. AREVA and Le Creusot Forge are under contractual obligations imposed through the U.S. licensees' applicable procurement documents to meet the reporting responsibilities under 10 CFR Part 21.

The NRC's senior management has reminded AREVA of its 10 CFR Part 21 reporting responsibilities, should the vendor determine that a reportable condition exists for U.S. nuclear facilities.

Once the NRC has sufficient additional information, a generic communication may be issued to reach a broader spectrum of the nuclear industry. The NRC may also conduct inspections in the future, as deemed appropriate, to ensure conformance and/or compliance.

The NRC has reached out to several organizations to determine the U.S. NPPs where Le Creusot Forge components may be located. To date, the NRC has not been provided with a list of the components. We are engaging closely with our counterparts at the French Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN) in an effort to determine if the issues that are being identified in France could also have implications for U.S. NPPs. The ASN confirmed that it will share pertinent information including the list of impacted components once it receives the list from AREVA. In addition, the NRC's Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research is engaging with its counterparts at the French Institute of Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety regarding the destructive testing for the Flamanville reactor pressure vessel.

Domestically, the NRC has contacted AREVA to discuss the extent of the irregularities identified at Le Creusot Forge and to request a list of U.S. plants potentially affected. AREVA informed us that their evaluation is still underway and that, at this point, none of the irregularities identified will lead to safety concerns. AREVA also informed us that they will provide us with a list of affected plants when their investigation is complete (around the end of July).

In the area of new reactor construction, the NRC has confirmation from the architectural engineering firm for the AP1000 new reactor construction at Vogtle and V.C. Summer that no components at these plants were supplied by Le Creusot Forge.

The NRC does not have any information in a nonpublic version in the ADAMS database on the quality of these components provided by AREVA.

I hope the above information adequately addresses your concerns. The NRC continues to strive to ensure protection of public health and safety. I am pleased that you care about this goal and I look forward to your continued input into regulatory processes. If you have further requests or questions, please contact Ms. Kerri Kavanagh of the Office of New Reactors at 301-415-3743.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Uhle, Director **/RA/**
Office of New Reactors

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Sincerely,

Jennifer Uhle, Director **/RA/**
Office of New Reactors

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