



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
2100 RENAISSANCE BLVD.
KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406-2713

October 14, 2016

Mr. David Agnew
Pilgrim Legislative Advisory Coalition
P.O. Box 2712
Orleans MA 02653

Dear Mr. Agnew:

I am responding to your August 29, 2016, letter that requested that Pilgrim nuclear power plant be shut now down based on its recent operating performance. The NRC shares your concern regarding the safety impact of the degraded performance at Pilgrim. As you know, on Sept. 1, 2015, the NRC issued a "White" finding and Notice of Violation to Pilgrim because Entergy had not adequately addressed a significant equipment problem that caused a failure of one of the plant's safety relief valves in February 2013, and then caused a similar failure in January 2015. This issue combined with a failure to adequately address the causes of multiple reactor shutdowns at Pilgrim in 2013 were indications of degrading performance that moved the plant into Column 4 (the "Repetitive Degraded Cornerstone" Column) of the NRC Action Matrix.

Based on our inspection and oversight program to date, we continue to conclude that Pilgrim is operating safely. While the issues that moved the plant into Column 4 were of low to moderate safety significance, the increased oversight, inspection, and assessment directed by the assessment process for a plant in Column 4 now allows us to closely monitor for indications of unacceptable performance. If at any time it is determined that performance at Pilgrim has declined to an unacceptable level, the NRC will not hesitate to take additional regulatory action, up to and including the issuance of a shutdown order.

More information regarding the additional oversight activities at Pilgrim is available at the following website: <http://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/reactors/pilg/special-oversight.html>. The site includes hyperlinks to inspection reports and assessment letters that document the results of inspection and assessment activities used to determine the need for additional regulatory action at Pilgrim. This includes our review and assessment of many of the examples of poor performance at Pilgrim that you listed in your letter. Items not as of yet listed in the website documentation (for example the Sept. 6 main steam line isolation valve failure) are still under inspector review. The results of the inspections for these issues will be documented in upcoming inspection reports and, as applicable, will be considered during our assessment of overall performance at the site.

I hope that this addresses your concerns regarding the NRC's actions in response to the recent degrading performance at Pilgrim. However, if you have any additional questions or concerns regarding these issues please feel free to contact Diane Screnci at 610-337-5330 or Neil Sheehan at 610-337-5331.

Sincerely,

/RA by Leonard Cline Acting for/

Arthur L. Burritt, Chief
Reactor Projects Branch 5
Division of Reactor Projects

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Sincerely,

/RA by Leonard Cline Acting for/

Arthur L. Burritt, Chief
Reactor Projects Branch 5
Division of Reactor Projects

cc:

Mrs. Janet Azarovitz
Mr. Tom Azarovitz
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Ms. Lillia Frantin
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