



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

February 7, 2018

Mr. Christopher E. Earls
Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs
1201 F Street, NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20004

**SUBJECT: RECEIPT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY INSTITUTE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
IMPROVING THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SIGNIFICANCE
DETERMINATION PROCESS**

Dear Mr. Earls:

This letter acknowledges receipt of a December 12, 2017, letter from the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) entitled, "Recommendations for Improving the Emergency Preparedness Significance Determination Process" (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML17354A094). The December 12 letter was in response to an invitation by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff at the Reactor Oversight Process public meeting on September 21, 2017 (meeting summary available as ADAMS Accession No. ML17290A114) for the industry to provide feedback on the Significance Determination Process (SDP). Initial feedback was provided in an October 12, 2017, letter from NEI to Chris Miller, Director, Division of Inspection and Regional Support, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (ADAMS Accession No. ML17338A031). In the December 12 letter and attachment, NEI provided background information, concerns, and recommendations for improving the emergency preparedness (EP) SDP, which is documented in Inspection Manual Chapter 0609, Appendix B, "Emergency Preparedness Significance Determination Process" (ADAMS Accession No. ML15128A462).

It has been almost two decades since the EP SDP was first developed. As part of the agency's strategy to ensure our activities continue to be effective, we plan to take a fresh look at the EP SDP. We will convene an expert team to evaluate the EP SDP based on the NRC's experience with the EP SDP as well as inputs from external stakeholders. The team will provide recommendations to NRC management that either support, or propose changes to, the EP SDP.

The NRC promotes transparency through open dialogue with industry and members of the public and appreciates NEI's comments. As part of our evaluation, we will provide an opportunity to discuss the EP SDP and any recommended enhancements with all interested stakeholders at a public meeting in the coming months. At this public meeting, the NRC will seek out views on how the EP SDP may be enhanced to address the concerns expressed and provide examples of how the EP SDP could be modified.

If you have any questions, please contact Robert Kahler by telephone at 301-287-3756 or by e-mail to Robert.Kahler@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Christopher G. Miller, Director
Division of Inspection and Regional Support
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

C. Earls

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Dated: February 07, 2018

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