



**UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**  
REGION I  
2100 RENAISSANCE BLVD., Suite 100  
KING OF PRUSSIA, PA 19406-2713

February 21, 2018

Office of the Board of Selectmen  
Town of Merrimac  
2-8 School Street  
Merrimac, MA 01860

Dear Chairman Connor, Mr. Breen, and Ms. Traynor:

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your letter dated January 11, 2018. Specifically, you stated that you supported the request by “We the People” for a public hearing regarding the effectiveness of the evacuation plan for the public within the 10 mile Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) surrounding the Seabrook Nuclear Station.

In the area of emergency preparedness and response, the NRC works in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for ensuring the onsite and offsite emergency plans are adequate. The regulation of onsite emergency response falls within the NRC’s purview, while the offsite oversight responsibility rests with FEMA. Per the memorandum of understanding between NRC and FEMA, dated December 7, 2015, (accessed from ADAMS under Accession Number ML15344A371<sup>1</sup>) the NRC relies on FEMA to provide a reasonable assurance finding on the adequacy of offsite emergency response programs, including the means for the timely evacuation of the public, for protecting the public health and safety.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has the overall authority for making protective action decisions (sheltering, evacuation, etc.) for ensuring the safety of their public during a radiological event. The state’s radiological emergency plan for implementing those decisions was developed by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and subsequently approved by FEMA. Additionally, FEMA evaluates the implementation of the State’s radiological emergency plan during emergency exercises conducted on a biennial basis to ensure continued reasonable assurance. The most recent exercise for Seabrook was conducted on April 5, 2016. FEMA held a public meeting to discuss the results of the exercise on April 8, 2016. The results of FEMA’s exercise evaluation can be found in the Seabrook Station After-Action Report issued July 8, 2016 (ML16363A414). The next FEMA evaluated exercise is scheduled to occur in April 2018.

To date, the NRC has not received any concerns from FEMA regarding the State’s capability for implementing their plan, including their capability for evacuating the general public in a timely and safe manner.

In part due to the concerns raised by “We the People”, MEMA made a presentation in a public forum before the Rowley, MA, Board of Selectmen on June 1, 2015 regarding the Commonwealth’s Emergency Plan. Minutes from this meeting are available on the Town of Rowley website: [http://www.townofrowley.net/pdf/150601\\_BOS\\_Minutes.pdf](http://www.townofrowley.net/pdf/150601_BOS_Minutes.pdf)

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<sup>1</sup> Designation refers to an Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) accession number. Documents referenced in this letter are publicly-available using the accession number in ADAMS at <https://adams.nrc.gov/wba/>. For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC’s Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to [pdr.resource@nrc.gov](mailto:pdr.resource@nrc.gov).

In addition to the meetings described in this letter, the NRC holds Annual Assessment Meetings to discuss the results of Seabrook Station performance. These meetings are held in the 10 mile EPZ and are typically held in late spring or early summer. The most recent meeting was held on June 7, 2017. A summary of this meeting can be accessed from ADAMS under Accession Number ML17172A132. While the purpose of the Annual Assessment Meeting is focused on current plant performance, the NRC takes questions from the public on a variety of topics including emergency preparedness. As noted above, evaluation of the adequacy of offsite emergency plans is FEMA's responsibility, so the NRC's response to these questions is limited to the adequacy of the licensee's onsite emergency preparedness program.

Thank you for your interest in this issue. We will continue to provide regular opportunities to address any public concerns regarding Seabrook, including offsite emergency preparedness. If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact Jonathan Greives, Regional State Liaison Officer, at (610) 337-5337.

Sincerely,

***/RA Original Signed by/***

David C. Lew  
Acting Regional Administrator

cc:

K. Schwartz, Director, MEMA

J. Giarrusso, MA State Liaison Officer, MEMA

S. Colman, Regional Assistance Committee Chairperson, FEMA, RI

LETTER TO MERRIMAC BOARD OF SELECTMEN DATED FEBRUARY 21, 2018

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\*See previous concurrence page for original signatures.

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