

February 7, 1997

Mr. Peter Christine  
P.O. Box 12  
Alna, ME 04535

Dear Mr. Christine:

I am responding to your letter to Chairman Jackson dated December 2, 1996, regarding the Independent Safety Assessment Team (ISAT) inspection conducted at Maine Yankee and your concern regarding "eroded margins." The NRC staff likewise has concerns regarding certain safety equipment.

The ISAT identified several issues that prevented the Team from concluding that certain systems could perform their intended safety functions at power levels above 2440 MWt. As you are aware, the staff issued a Confirmatory Order requiring that the plant be operated at no greater than 2440 MWt, which was the initial licensed power level. The staff explained in the Order the safety basis to assure operation at 2440 MWt poses no undue risk to the health and safety of the public.

The staff has scheduled an enforcement conference with the licensee for March 11, 1997. This meeting will be conducted near the Maine Yankee plant site and open for public observation. Issues from the ISAT associated with apparent violations of regulatory requirements will be discussed at this meeting.

The licensee indicated in its December 10, 1996, response to the ISAT findings that they intend to address technical concerns and request NRC approval to return to 100% power in 1998. In order for the staff to approve a return to a 2700 MWt the licensee must address your concern and that of the staff regarding margins and the ability to operate safely at a higher power level. The NRC will then determine whether the plant can operate above 2440 MWt.

I trust the above is responsive to your concern.

Sincerely,

(Original Signed By)

John A. Zwolinski, Deputy Director  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-309

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SECY #: CRC-96-1215

PLANT: MAINE YANKEE

SUBJECT: CONCERNED THAT MAINE YANKEE COMMUNITY NEWS IS CLOUDING  
THE FACTS AND IS A DISSERVICE TO MAINE CITIZENS

DATE REFERRED TO NRR:

DATE DUE TO EDO: As appropriate

FOR SIGNATURE OF: As appropriate

ISSUES RAISED:

WEEKLY MEETINGS AND CURRENT STATUS:

CONTACTS:

NRR:

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*Commission mtg is 2/4/97*

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CORRESPONDENCE CONTROL TICKET

PAPER NUMBER: CRC-96-1215

LOGGING DATE: Dec 6 96

ACTION OFFICE: EDO

AUTHOR: PETER CHRISTINE  
AFFILIATION: MAINE

ADDRESSEE: CHAIRMAN JACKSON

LETTER DATE: Dec 2 96 FILE CODE: IDR-5 MAINE YANKEE

SUBJECT: MAINE YANKEE--NEWS ARTICLE

ACTION: Appropriate

DISTRIBUTION: CHAIRMAN

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