



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 27, 1999

Dr. Gerald R. Mazetis
P.O. Box 685
Heathsville, VA 24473

Dear Dr. Mazetis:

In your letter of March 2, 1999, to Chairman Jackson, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), you requested a reassessment of the risks associated with military aircraft activities in the vicinity of the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant (CCNPP). The basis for your request is the potential effect of changes (past and proposed future) in Naval aircraft operations in the Patuxent River Complex. Specifically, you requested that a risk determination of an aircraft crash at the CCNPP be made with respect to the current license as well as for the extended renewal period.

As stated in "Appendix A - Section A.1.1.1 - Operating Safety Issues - Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants - Regarding the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant - Final Report - NUREG-1437, Supplement 1, dated October 1999," your concerns were referred to me for reply since your comments involve concerns that are relevant to current CCNPP operations.

Your concerns regarding the military aircraft activities in the Patuxent River Complex are appropriate and in accord with existing requirements imposed on the licensee. Specifically aircraft overflights, including military flight operations, are one of several types of man-made hazards that are addressed in the licensing of nuclear power plants, including the CCNPP. Factors affecting the probability of an on-site aircraft crash include crash rates for each type of aircraft and operation as well as the traffic density (e.g., flight operations per year). As you note, the military flight operations within the Patuxent River Complex are subject to change. Hence, the corresponding risk due to an on-site aircraft crash also can change.

In so far as the current license for CCNPP and any changes to date regarding military flight operations in the subject area, an updated risk assessment has been made within the scope of the CCNPP individual plant examination of external events (IPEEE) and the results reported in a letter report dated August 28, 1997. Taking into account all current flight activity data (commercial, general, and military aviation combined) and some flight restrictions that have been set in place with respect to helicopters, the IPEEE assessment indicates that the on-site crash probability is approximately 10^{-6} crashes/year.

Regarding license renewal for CCNPP, future changes, such as military flight operations, are not within the scope of the license renewal process. Addressing risk impacts of potential future changes is similar to what is required for maintaining a current licensing basis. Namely, under license renewal provisions, the licensee is obligated to monitor and report to the NRC any activities in the vicinity of the plant that could impact the safe operation of the plant. In the event an activity is identified that could impact significantly the safety of the plant, specific steps have to be taken to lower the risk to an acceptable level. In the case of the military aircraft

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activities within the Patuxent River Complex, one approach is for the licensee and the Navy to implement corrective actions (e.g., rerouting flight paths, placing flight restrictions, etc.) which would lower the risk.

In summary, your concerns regarding the existing and future military aircraft activities in the vicinity of CCNPP are appropriate and of common interest to us. On the basis of recent assessments of the associated risks, we believe that the current CCNPP licensing basis continues to be met. If future changes are sufficient to change the current assessment, there are NRC regulations for the CCNPP that require the licensee to address the hazard and take steps in reducing the risk to an acceptable level. We thank you for your interest in the safe operation of the CCNPP and hope that the above information responds to your concerns.

Sincerely,



Alexander W. Dromerick, Sr. Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

cc: Timothy S. Smith, Executive Director
Naval Air Station
22268 Cedar Point Road
Patuxent River, Maryland 20670-1154

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Original signed by:
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