

50-271



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20556-0001

February 12, 1997

Jonathan M. Block, Esq.  
Main Street  
P. O. Box 566  
Putney, VT 05346-0566

Dear Mr. Block:

This letter acknowledges receipt of a Petition pursuant to 10 CFR 2.206 submitted by you on December 6, 1996, on behalf of Citizens Awareness Network, Inc. (CAN or Petitioner). The Petition was submitted to the Secretary of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and requested evaluation of certain documents relating to the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station operated by the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation (Licensee). The Petition was forwarded to my office for response.

The first document included in the Petition is a CAN memorandum dated December 5, 1996, that reviews information presented by the Licensee at an enforcement conference held on July 23, 1996, involving the Vermont Yankee residual heat removal system minimum flow valves. CAN raises a concern that the corrective action taken by the Licensee in opening these valves may have introduced an unreviewed safety question with regard to containment isolation.

The minimum flow valves open a flow path from the pump discharge to below the surface in the suppression pool. The piping containing these valves penetrating containment is seismic Category I, with a water seal and does not connect to containment atmosphere. There is a check valve upstream in each individual pump line. The minimum flow valve, though open, can be remotely operated. The staff's preliminary review indicates that the water seal and check valves meet Appendix J requirements with the minimum flow valve initial position open. These valves are required to be open for automatic low pressure coolant injection initiation during an accident. They are not required to close automatically for containment isolation.

The second document included in the Petition is a CAN memorandum dated December 6, 1996, that contains a review of certain licensee event reports (LERs) submitted by the Licensee in the latter part of 1996. A variety of issues are presented, including fire protection, tornado protection, thermal protection for piping lines, equipment operability, and equipment testing. On the basis of its analysis of the LERs, CAN reaches certain conclusions regarding the performance of the Licensee and actions that should be taken.

On the basis of these documents, CAN requests that the NRC determine whether enforcement action is warranted pursuant to 10 CFR 2.206.

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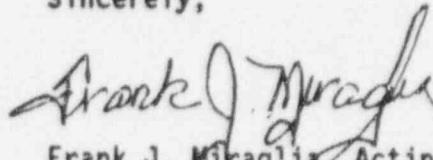
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Jonathan M. Block

- 2 -

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.206, the NRC will take action with regard to the issues raised in the Petition within a reasonable time. For your information, I have enclosed a copy of the notice that is being filed with the Office of the Federal Register for publication. For your information, Mr. Vernon Rooney (415-3045), has been designated as the Petition Manager for this Petition. I have also enclosed for your information a pamphlet on the public petition process.

Sincerely,



Frank J. Miraglia, Acting Director  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosures: 1. Federal Register Notice  
2. Public Petition Process

cc w/encls: See next page

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Sincerely,  
Original signed by  
Frank J. Miraglia,  
Frank J. Miraglia, Acting Director  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

- Enclosures: 1. Federal Register Notice  
2. Pamphlet on the Petition Process

cc w/encls: See next page

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