

The Honorable Richard B. Cheney  
President of the United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. President:

I am forwarding the NRC's "Report to Congress on Abnormal Occurrences, Fiscal Year 2003." This report on events involving radioactive materials use is required by Section 208 of the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 (ERA) [Public Law 93-438]. In the context of the ERA, an abnormal occurrence (AO) is an unscheduled incident or event that the Commission determines to be significant from the standpoint of public health or safety. The Federal Reports Elimination and Sunset Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-66) requires that AOs be reported to Congress annually.

The report describes five medical events (previously termed misadministrations) at facilities licensed by the NRC. Three events involved patients undergoing therapeutic brachytherapy treatments, one event involved an unintentional therapeutic dose of sodium iodide to an embryo/fetus, and one event involved a diagnostic overexposure to a minor. The report also discusses nine AOs at facilities licensed by Agreement States. Seven events are medical events (five therapeutic and two diagnostic), one event involved overexposure to a radiographer and one event involved overexposure to members of the public from a damaged gauge.

The report also gives updates on two events initially reported in the fiscal year (FY) 2002 annual report to Congress. The first update addresses the degradation of the reactor pressure vessel head at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station. Davis-Besse has been shut down since the March 2002 discovery of the reactor vessel head degradation and will not be allowed to restart until the NRC has completed a thorough review to ensure that safety will be maintained. The second update describes inspection and enforcement actions undertaken after an unplanned radiological exposure of oil rig workers.

Agreement States are those States that have entered into a formal agreement with the NRC pursuant to Section 274 of the Atomic Energy Act (AEA) to regulate certain quantities of AEA licensed material at facilities located within their borders.

Sincerely,

Nils J. Diaz

Enclosure: "Report to Congress on Abnormal  
Occurrences, Fiscal Year 2003"