

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON REACTOR SAFEGUARDS  
UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

April 11, 1966

Honorable Glenn T. Seaborg  
Chairman  
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission  
Washington, D. C. 20545

Subject: REPORT ON USE OF THE NATIONAL REACTOR TESTING STATION

Dear Dr. Seaborg:

Recent reviews of reactor projects at the National Reactor Testing Station (NRTS) have indicated a growing problem in connection with off-site dosage levels in the unlikely event of a severe reactor accident. Some of the newer uncontained reactors have power levels considerably higher than previous NRTS reactors and are potentially capable of generating off-site doses significantly in excess of the 10 CFR Part 100 guidelines.

As detailed in its individual reports to you on these reactors, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards has assured itself in each case that, despite the absence of conventional containment, adequate protection of the health and safety of the public against the consequences of a severe reactor accident exists, in the form of engineered safeguards, remoteness, and planned accident protection capability, including emergency evacuation procedures. With respect to the last point, on February 9, 1966, the Committee's Environmental Subcommittee reviewed the NRTS emergency and disaster plans with representatives of the AEC Idaho Operations Office (ID) Health and Safety Division, who are responsible for the formulation and execution of these procedures. The Subcommittee was in general favorably impressed with the scope and detail of the plans.

The Committee wishes to reaffirm its long held opinion of the suitability of the remote NRTS site for experimental reactor projects. However, it is the Committee's opinion that the presence of several reactors of the power levels now contemplated at NRTS makes it timely to re-evaluate and increase emphasis on accident protection and evacuation procedures for off-site populations. The Committee suggests that a coordinated review should be made by the various NRTS reactor operating groups, AEC-ID, and the AEC Regulatory Staff, of the possible need to

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extend the areas for which evacuation plans are maintained in a state of readiness and to assure that these plans would be implemented with dispatch in the unlikely event of a serious reactor accident. In addition, the Committee suggests that, if reactors of significantly higher power levels are to be operated at NRTS, additional protective measures, such as containment, should be considered.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

David Okrent  
Chairman