

# **Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency**

**Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure  
Committee on Veterans' Affairs and Emergency Preparedness  
Pennsylvania Senate  
Joint Hearing on Nuclear Preparedness and Energy**

**Testimony by:  
Robert French  
Director**

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Chairpersons Baker, Dinniman, Tomlinson, Boscola, and committee members, I am Robert French, director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. On behalf of Governor Rendell, I welcome this opportunity to discuss Pennsylvania's Radiological Emergency Preparedness program.

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) is charged by State Law with the development and maintenance of an offsite radiological emergency response, preparedness, planning and recovery program consistent with the Commonwealth Emergency Operations Plan and in accordance with other applicable Federal regulations and State Laws for each nuclear generating facility that has received an operating license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission..

The Radiological program resides within the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Bureau of Plans, Division of Technological Hazards which is also responsible for the Commonwealth Hazardous Materials Chemical Safety Program.

Pennsylvania is home to five nuclear power plant sites which are operated by three separate utilities. Four of the sites are located on the eastern portion of the state and include the Limerick Generating Station near Pottstown and operated by the Exelon Corporation; the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station in southern York County and also operated by Exelon; the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station located near Berwick and operated by PPL; and the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station near Middletown and operated by AmerGen-Exelon). The fifth plant site, the Beaver Valley Power Station, is located in western Pennsylvania near Shippingport and is operated by First Energy.

Since 1980, all commercial nuclear power plants in the United States are required to have emergency plans in place which include preparedness and emergency response actions for the population and area within an approximate 10-mile radius of each plant. The 10-mile radius area is referred to as the Plume Exposure Pathway – Emergency Planning Zone. The emergency plans are required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. These requirements are the result of the analysis following the March 28, 1979 Three Mile Island Unit 2 accident. Additional

requirements include improved communications systems, public alert and notification systems and improved training for the power plant operators and the off-site responders.

Federal regulations also require each of the plants to conduct a full-scale exercise in conjunction with the off-site authorities every two years to test the planning and response capabilities. This past year we successfully completed full-scale exercises with communities neighboring the Three Mile Island Nuclear Station in southcentral Pennsylvania and the Limerick Generating Station located in the southeast area of the state.

PEMA is responsible for the annual review and revision, as necessary, of the risk and support county, municipal and school district radiological plans in conjunction with the respective emergency management agencies to ensure consistency with the Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Plan. PEMA is further responsible for performing actions necessary to satisfy the Commonwealth's responsibilities relative to Federal guidance memoranda.

The five Nuclear Power Plant sites in Pennsylvania include portions of eleven counties, one hundred forty six municipalities and more than fifty School Districts. Fifteen additional counties serve in a support role to accept evacuees and provide mass care or emergency shelter. In total, a population of 640,360 live within the five emergency planning zones.

In order to address the various aspects required by the regulations including planning, exercises, equipment requirements and related expenses; the Commonwealth enacted the Radiological Emergency Response Fund or Act 147 of 1984 which required each of the nuclear power plants to contribute an annual fee of \$100,000 for use by the affected counties, municipalities and school districts for the purchase of equipment and planning services. An additional law established the Radiological Emergency Protection Fund which also required a \$100,000 annual contribution per site for use by PEMA to support the required planning and preparedness actions. These two laws and their level of funding had not been adjusted since their passage in the mid 1980's. During the last year, and as a direct result of the cooperative efforts of the Nuclear Utilities responsible for the five plants in Pennsylvania, the laws and the level of funding have been revised to increase the amount of financial support available to the counties, municipalities, school districts and the State Emergency Management Agency. On July 13, 2007 Governor Edward G. Rendell signed Act 31 of 2007 into law.

It is important to note that the level of preparedness and the cyclic exercises required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Emergency Management Agency associated with Nuclear Power Plants have multiple benefits. It has long been recognized that the off-site response organizations including the counties, municipalities, school districts and their first responders are indeed better prepared to address all hazards, including responses to Hazardous Materials events, flooding, severe weather and even school violence due to the planning and preparedness requirements for the Nuclear Power Plants.

As a result of this public-private partnership, the Commonwealth, local governments and citizens are better prepared. This completes my general overview of this important program. I would be happy to address questions at this time.