



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

October 24, 2022

The Honorable Bennie Thompson  
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), I am responding to your August 23, 2022, letter that urged the NRC to take immediate actions to address vulnerabilities in its controls for purchases of radioactive material, as identified by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). We take GAO's recommendations seriously and consider them in ongoing updates to our programs.

The NRC staff is actively working on a rulemaking directed by the Commission to require specific means for licensees to verify the licensing status of any entity seeking to acquire Category 3 quantities of radioactive materials. The staff has accelerated this rulemaking and has a revised goal of providing a draft proposed rule to the Commission no later than the end of 2022. If approved, this rulemaking will address the central concern raised in the recent GAO report. In addition, we will continue to explore other options for expeditiously addressing the issues identified by the GAO.

The NRC staff also continues to engage licensees and Agreement States on the issues identified by the GAO. The NRC staff issued a communication to its manufacturer and distributor licensees and Agreement State regulators to ensure they are aware of the issues identified by the GAO and remind them of ways to identify fraudulent licenses. The NRC staff also reminded licensees that under current requirements they can contact the regulator (either the NRC or Agreement State, as appropriate) to verify that a license holder can receive radioactive material under the terms of its license. In addition, the NRC staff contacted industry trade associations for source producers to discuss the GAO recommendations and encouraged the trade associations to proactively engage their member companies. We will continue to engage with all relevant stakeholders on their responses to our communications and the findings of the GAO audit.

The NRC closely monitors the threat environment and regularly engages with the intelligence community, law enforcement, and other Federal agencies. The NRC will react promptly if conditions in the threat environment warrant.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me or have your staff contact Eugene Dacus, Director of the Office of Congressional Affairs, at (301) 415-1776.

Sincerely,

Christopher T. Hanson

Identical letter sent to:

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson  
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Katko  
Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Chairman, Committee on Energy  
and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Guest  
Vice Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ritchie Torres  
Vice Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515