



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

August 16, 2011

Ken Natesan
Argonne National Laboratory
NE Division
9700 S. Cass Avenue
Argonne, IL 60439

Dear Ken,

I would like to express my deep appreciation for the service you provided to the Office of Nuclear Energy Response Team (NERT), which was formed by the Department of Energy (DOE) following the earthquake and tsunami at the Japanese Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant. At that time, the DOE and its leadership were dealing with unverified, confusing and inconsistent information about the status of the plant and its reactors. Through the efforts of you and your NERT colleagues, the flow and interpretation of data from the plant quickly improved. Your diligent efforts to analyze the information and identify issues requiring clarification provided an important service to the Secretary of Energy, the Department, and the nation of Japan.

I would also like to recognize those of you who stood watches at the Department's Emergency Operations Center. This was often done in addition to serving on the NERT. Your presence there provided a valuable service by representing the Office of Nuclear Energy as part of the larger DOE response to the emergency. Through your efforts, NE quickly established itself as a trustworthy technical resource for issues concerning the reactors and, eventually, the site clean-up.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who worked to establish the connection between the Department and its national laboratories. In the early days of the emergency, the first instinct of each national laboratory was to respond by applying its own unique technical skills to understanding the situation at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant. This was a good start, but there was clearly a need for central coordination. Part of the NERT took on that challenge and was able to quickly understand what work was being done by the labs and how additional analytical tasks would be assigned, tracked and completed in a coordinated manner.

I believe your service on the NERT was an outstanding example of how the Department and its employees can quickly come together, regardless of organizational boundaries, to address an issue of national and international importance. Your service is a credit to the Department of Energy and the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Peter Lyons".

Peter Lyons
Assistant Secretary
for Nuclear Energy

