



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES INDIAN POINT 2 STEAM GENERATOR INSPECTION REPORT

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a report to Consolidated Edison Company of New York detailing the findings of a special inspection that reviewed the cause of the February 15th steam generator tube failure at the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant. The team inspection was conducted from March 7 through July 20 at the Buchanan, N.Y., facility and focused on Con Ed's performance during its 1997 inspection of the plant's four steam generators.

The NRC team has preliminarily concluded that the overall direction and execution of the 1997 steam generator in-service examinations were deficient in several respects. Deficiencies in the steam generator inspection program resulted in the company's failure to adequately account for conditions which adversely affected the detectability of, and increased the susceptibility to, tube flaws. The team concluded that these failures resulted in tubes with flaws being left in service following the 1997 inspection.

Under the NRC's revised reactor oversight process, the agency assesses the inspection findings and characterizes their risk significance by color, specifically green, white, yellow or red. (A green finding results in normal NRC oversight, while white, yellow, or red assessments are considered progressively more serious and receive commensurately greater oversight.) That process assessed the potential impact of running the plant for an operating cycle with the steam generators in a degraded condition. The NRC determined the issue to be of potentially high risk significance. As such, the staff has preliminarily characterized the findings as "red."

While the NRC staff has identified these areas of concern, it is important to note that a review of the February 15th event by an NRC Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) earlier this year found that the plant's licensed operators appropriately responded to the situation, that plant equipment performed as expected and that there were no public health and safety consequences associated with the event itself.

The NRC will meet with Con Ed at a Regulatory Conference, tentatively scheduled for September 26, to discuss the finding. At the conference, which will be held in the NRC's Region I office in King of Prussia, Pa., Con Ed will have an opportunity to provide NRC staff with additional

information, including its position on the significance of the issues discussed in the report. This information will be used by the NRC in determining its final characterization of the issues.

The inspection report is posted on the NRC's web site at:

<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/REACTOR/IP/index.html>

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