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January 4, 2002
E910-02-001

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Attention: Document Control Desk
Washington, DC 20555

Gentlemen,

Subject: Saxton Nuclear Experimental Corporation (SNEC), Operating
License No., DPR-4, Docket No. 50-146 Event Report 2001-01

Attachment 1 to this letter provides a report, requested by Mr. Alexander Adams of your staff, of an administrative violation of SNEC Technical Specification 1.1.3.3. This specification requires that all access points to the Containment Vessel and Decommissioning Support Facility be secured following an authorized entry. Contrary to that requirement, as reported in Attachment 1, on December 7, 2001, an authorized individual in making the normal "first of the day" entry discovered an unlocked door.

If you have any questions on the information provided in Attachment 1 please contact Mr. James Byrne of my staff at (717) 948-8461.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. A. Kuehn", written over a horizontal line.

G. A. Kuehn
Director, SNEC Facility

cc: NRC Project Manager
NRC Project Scientist, Region 1

IE22

ATTACHMENT 1

Event Description:

At about 7:00 a.m. on December 7, 2001, an authorized individual was making a normal 'first of the day' entry into the Decommissioning Support Facility via the Personnel Access Facility access door. Upon entry, he discovered that the south access door to the DSB was not locked, contrary to procedural and Technical Specification requirements. Senior site management was informed immediately.

An investigation was initiated that included a review of applicable logs and interviews with site personnel who would normally have access to the doors and keys. The investigation determined the following:

- The affected door is not normally unlocked and used for access. It is equipped with a crash bar, and normally used as an emergency exit from the building. The day before this event it had been unlocked, with proper supervisory authorization, and used for routine ingress and egress by contractor personnel while performing large area survey work.
- On December 6, 2001, the 'End of Day Checklist' was signed off as completed, and the access key was turned over to an individual who would need access to the building on December 7.
- On the morning of December 7, that individual discovered that the subject door was unlocked.

The checklist used to verify that the exclusion area is secured for the day states in step 7, "all DSF doors, roll-up doors, windows/window gratings, closed and locked, temperature controls set and intrusion alarm activated". This statement includes multiple verifications by one checklist item.

Apparently, the individual performing the checklist did not physically check this door, since the door is normally locked during the day, and there was no expectation of finding it unlocked.

Root Cause:

The root cause of this event is personnel error compounded by complacency. The individual performing the 'End of Day' checks was routinely assigned this responsibility and was very well aware of the items to be checked and their location within the facility. Based on our investigation, we have concluded that the individual assumed that the door in question was properly secured, because it is seldom used, and did not personally verify its condition.

Immediate Actions:

The site supervisor issued a verbal directive to perform an independent verification of the 'End of Day' checklist until the incident had been investigated and any long-term corrective actions implemented.

Long Term Corrective Actions:

The following action will be taken:

This incident and its causes will be discussed with all site personnel. The discussion will emphasize the importance of physically verifying that actions are completed rather than assuming that nothing has occurred that could have changed the condition since the last time it was checked. This action will be completed by January 31, 2002.