

Files

October 8, 1964

R. W. Kirkman, Director
Region I, Division of Compliance

UNITED NUCLEAR CORPORATION, SCRAP RECOVERY FACILITY,
WOOD RIVER JUNCTION, RHODE ISLAND, LICENSE NO. SNM-777,
TYPE "A" CASE - CRITICALITY INCIDENT - MEETING WITH MANAGE-
MENT, SEPTEMBER 29, 1964

On the afternoon of September 29, 1964, I met with manage-
ment of United Nuclear Corporation in the New Haven offices
to present the findings that resulted from our investigation
of the July 24, 1964, criticality incident.

In attendance at the meeting were the following persons:

Representing United Nuclear Corporation

John Lindberg, Vice President in charge of the Fuels Recovery
Division

R. C. Johnson, Acting Manager, Chemical Operations

W. L. Allison, Manager, Quality Control

D. Frank Cronin, Director of Licensing for the Fuels Division

Representing Region I, Division of Compliance

Robert W. Kirkman, Director

Willis G. Browne, Criticality Specialist

James F. Bresson, Radiation Specialist

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With the exception of Cronin, the other United Nuclear Corporation representatives comprise the "Go-No Go" Committee established by Lindberg. This Committee is responsible for evaluating the information gathered by the United Nuclear Corporation investigating teams and approving the plans and procedures that are to be used for resuming operations.

After explaining to Lindberg and his Committee the purpose of the visit, the first matter taken up was the items of noncompliance as they appear in Volume III of our report. Only one item of noncompliance gave rise to serious discussion, and that was in connection with 10 CFR 20.201(b) for failure to properly evaluate the hazards associated with re-entry to the facility following the criticality incident. Lindberg objected to the use of the word "properly," and I told him he could substitute the word "adequately," or any other word with similar import. I explained again, at this time, that the items, as they were presented, were not couched in legal language, but presented with the idea of conveying our evaluation of the information gathered on this point. Thereafter, Lindberg took issue with the term "re-entry," suggesting that this should apply to only the first re-entry and not subsequent re-entries made during the night of July 24, 1964.

The other item of noncompliance resulting in any discussion was the one with regard to License Condition 13, wherein the licensee failed to submit a report of air particulate and liquid effluent surveys in a proposed future survey within 90 days of the startup date, which was March 16, 1964. The Company had some feeling that, rather than the March 16th date, the date should be the first week in May, when they actually began operations. It was pointed out that we felt that it should be March 16th, inasmuch as waste fuel was received for processing on that date.

The second matter discussed was the weaknesses in the Health Physics Program, as outlined in my memorandum of transmittal, dated September 16, 1964. No serious issue was taken with any of the material presented. Most of the discussion centered on Cronin's desire to obtain from Bresson more information as to kinds, type and limitations of various equipment referred to.

The third matter discussed was the weaknesses in the nuclear safety control, again as outlined in my memorandum of transmittal of September 16th. Objection was raised to none of the points made, other than items 5, 6 and 7 of my memorandum. Allison said that he believed that these items were "subjective" in nature, the subjectivity being attributed by Allison to Browne. The reasons for the three items were then discussed by us in considerable detail. I think that Lindberg, at least, appreciated the significance of these three items after the more detailed discussion. Allison appeared still to have reservations on item 5.

After the initial "fencing," and the discussion of the first five items of noncompliance, as they appeared in Volume III, Lindberg himself had very little to say. Johnson throughout the meeting had almost nothing of any consequence to say. Allison had the most to say, but here again only in connection with nuclear safety deficiencies appearing in items 5, 6 and 7.

I am not sure and neither is Browne or Bresson whether the UNC people at the meeting fully understood what we were saying and what their problems really are, with the possible exception of Cronin. At one point near the end of the meeting, for instance, in discussing what action was necessary, Lindberg said that, if he were to get notification of the items of non-compliance and deficiencies, as we presented them to him, he would be able to answer such a thing "in five minutes."

At the conclusion of the meeting, Lindberg expressed his appreciation for our visit, expressed pleasure with our cooperation, and complimented us on our objectivity. We took leave in an atmosphere that seemed cordial.

cc: L. D. Low, Director, CO:H2 ✓

ADVANCE