

From: A. Randolph Blough *RI*
To: Stuart Richards
Date: 2/2/04 5:13PM
Subject: Fwd: Significant Letter to PSEG Re: Safety Concerns at Salem and Hope Creek

P.S. On the NRR side, we worked thru corny to get a nod from NRR sr mgt, and Hub spoke to Dyer and Collins

✓>>> Stuart Richards *NRR* 02/02/04 08:59AM >>>

Randy

Where in the ROP process does this letter fall?

Stu

✓>>> A. Randolph Blough *RI* 01/28/04 05:52PM >>>

Today we issued a very significant letter (attached), to PSEG. The letter provides interim results of our ongoing SCWE (safety conscious work environment) review, points out areas of NRC concern, and compels them to undertake their own in-depth review.

A lot of fantastic staff work, (particularly from Eileen Neff of OI, Scott Barber, Dave Vito, & several others) has gotten us to the point where we can clearly and confidently outline the issues and get all our stakeholders aligned to support such a unique action. By putting this out now, we give the licensee an opportunity to address issues before they fester longer and things potentially degrade.

As you read the letter, you will see that the issues are not entirely unique to Salem/ Hope Creek (it's just that the number and severity is decidedly more significant there).

Many of them are reminiscent of things we talked about at the inspector seminar as challenges to plants trying to transform into more efficient, cost-competitive operations; a lot of mis-steps and wrong messages, or worse, can occur.

I am not expecting you to do anything now but read this email and its attachments. In fact, it's best if you let it sit for now. But now you have the info if asked. By early next week, some of your licensees are likely to be noticing this action and asking about it. Be confident that we did what we did only after a huge amount of info gathering and analysis, and painstaking deliberation. We never take any step like this lightly by any stretch.

But I will not be disappointed at all if many other licensees do some sober introspection in light of the this letter.

Attached for your info is a copy of the letter and the Q/As from our comm plan. Listed directly below are the key points from our Comm Plan. The letter will go into ADAMS soon and will eventually become public. The talking points below and Q/A attached are for your use in discussions as needed, but hard copies should not be distributed outside the Agency.

regards,
randy

Comm Plan Excerpts: "Today the NRC issued a letter to PSEG requesting that PSEG perform an in-depth assessment of the work environments at the Salem and Hope Creek stations regarding the raising and addressing of safety issues. The letter requests that PSEG provide a written plan of action within 30 days.

The request was based on interim results from an ongoing NRC special review, which has included interviews of a wide range of Salem and Hope Creek personnel. Although there have been no serious safety violations thus far, the results have led to some concerns about the station work environment. NRC is concerned that if work environment issues are left unaddressed, an unacceptable, chilled environment could be created for raising and addressing safety issues and for making appropriate operational decisions.

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The letter also acknowledges that some improvements may have occurred under new management and that organizational realignments may have helped. PSEG has performed some surveys, which could be a part of their assessment.

In the last two periodic assessment letters to PSEG, the NRC has highlighted that, even though the plants have operated with good safety margin, there have been weaknesses at the stations in their efforts to identify, thoroughly evaluate, and correct problems. The next NRC assessment letter will be issued in early March.

We have found no serious safety violations and have not concluded there has been a breakdown in the work environment. We are providing information at this time to enable the company to address potential issues before they become serious and impact on plant safety.

Mail Envelope Properties (401ECB6D.BDD : 9 : 34932)

Subject: Fwd: Significant Letter to PSEG Re: Safety Concerns at Salem and Hope Creek
Creation Date: 2/2/04 5:13PM
From: A. Randolph Blough
Created By: ARB@nrc.gov

Recipients	Action	Date & Time
nrc.gov		
owf4_po.OWFN_DO	Delivered	02/02/04 05:13PM
SAR (Stuart Richards)	Opened	02/04/04 10:23AM
	Deleted	02/04/04 10:24AM
	Emptied	02/04/04 12:58PM

Post Office	Delivered	Route
owf4_po.OWFN_DO	02/02/04 05:13PM	nrc.gov

Files	Size	Date & Time
MESSAGE	6121	02/02/04 05:13PM

Options
Auto Delete: No
Expiration Date: None
Notify Recipients: Yes
Priority: Standard
Reply Requested: No
Return Notification: None

Concealed Subject: No
Security: Standard

To Be Delivered: Immediate
Status Tracking: All Information