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May 20, 1977

Mr. James P. O'Reilly, Director
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Inspection and Enforcement
Region 1
631 Park Avenue
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406

Dear Mr. O'Reilly:

NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-272/77-13
INSPECTION DATE APRIL 12, 1977
NO. 1 UNIT
SALEM GENERATING STATION

We have received and reviewed the report of your inspection conducted April 12, 1977. The report was transmitted with your letter of April 29, 1977 and received on May 2, 1977. Our response to the items of noncompliance is as follows:

77-13-01

"Facility Operating License No. DPR-70 Amendment No. 4 paragraph 2.C.(4), dated January 6, 1977, states in part that, "Public Service Electric and Gas Company shall not operate the reactor at power levels above P-7 (11 percent)...with less than four (4) reactor coolant loops in operation until...approval for less than four loop operation at power levels above P-7 has been granted by the Commission by amendment of this license."

Contrary to the above on April 12, 1977, the plant was operated from 10:01 a.m. to 10:32 a.m. at 25 percent power with No. 14 Reactor Coolant Pump idle and the associated loop out of service.

On April 12, 1977, at 1001 hours, while in Mode 1 operation, an attempt was made to transfer the 1G 4kV Group Bus from the Station Power Transformer to the Auxiliary Power Transformer. During the transfer, the feeder breaker from the Station Power Transformer opened but the feeder breaker from the Auxiliary

Power Transformer failed to close. This resulted in a loss of the 1G 4kV Group Bus and a loss of No. 14 Reactor Coolant Pump. Plant conditions were stabilized at 25% power in three (3) loop operation. Investigation revealed that the unit isolation trip had not been reset, therefore, not allowing the feeder breaker from the Auxiliary Power Transformer to close. At approximately 1015 hours, the Unit Isolation Trip had been reset and the 1G 4kV Group Bus was re-energized from the Auxiliary Power Transformer. At 1032 hours, the No. 14 Reactor Coolant Pump was re-started.

There are several factors which contributed to the oversight of the license amendment prohibiting less than four loop operation above 11% power. Cold SRO licensed supervisory personnel have been standing watch to meet the technical specification requirements until the control operators are RO licensed. This has required a certain amount of overtime and irregular shift assignments and has prevented the start of the License Operator Retraining Program. As a result, training of licensed personnel during this interim period has not been as effective as we had expected. In this particular situation, the licensed operators were originally trained and granted their SRO licenses based on the Technical Specification which does allow three loop operation. The license amendment which restricts this mode of operation came approximately six months after the license was issued, and although operating personnel were made aware of the restriction, the training emphasis was obviously insufficient to overcome the more rigorous earlier training.

Therefore, in addition to the corrective action listed below, we will review the license and technical specification requirements and operating incidents that have taken place to date to be sure they are incorporated into the retraining program which should resume in June.

1. An on-the-spot change was made to OI II-1.3-1 which added Step 3.11 "Do not start a Reactor Coolant Pump while reactor is critical", on April 12, 1977.

On April 12, 1977, a night order book entry was made to re-instruct Control Room personnel of the Reactor Coolant Pump restriction.

2. On April 15, 1977, a plastic tag was placed on the Operating Console as a warning to Operators that three loop operation above P-7, is not allowed.

77-13-02

Technical Specification 6.8.1 requires written procedures to be established, implemented, and maintained covering operation of the reactor coolant system.

Operating Instruction II 1.3-3, OPERATING WITH LESS THAN FOUR REACTOR COOLANT LOOPS IN SERVICE, SECTION 5.5, "Starting a Reactor Coolant Pump (RCP) During Power Operation," requires power level to be reduced to below 10 percent prior to starting a RCP in an idle loop.

Contrary to the above, No. 14 Reactor Coolant Pump was started in the idle loop at 10:32 a.m. on April 12, 1977, with the reactor at 25 percent power. An unplanned initiation of safety injection occurred as a result of adverse steam flow and reactor coolant temperature conditions.

The following corrective action has been taken:

An on-the-spot change added a precaution to OI II-1.3-3 on April 12, 1977, which states, "Do not start a Reactor Coolant Pump with the reactor critical."

In response to your concern about the number and frequency of operator induced safeguard actuations, station management has instituted a system which requires operator written responses to variances in operating practices. This system is expected to stimulate operator awareness of his actions and will indicate to management those areas where additional training or procedure modification is required. Also, the Nuclear Review Board will be asked to review the Licensed Operator Retraining Program after it has been in effect for six months, to verify its adequacy.

If you require additional information, we will be pleased to discuss it with you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Schneider".