



Jersey Central Power & Light Company

MADISON AVENUE AT PUNCH BOWL ROAD • MORRISTOWN, N. J. 07960 • 539-6111

December 17, 1971

Dr. Peter A. Morris, Director
Division of Reactor Licensing
United States Atomic Energy Commission
Washington D. C. 20545



Dear Dr. Morris:

Subject: Oyster Creek Station
Docket No. 50-219
Loss of Station Air System

The purpose of this letter is to report to you the recent loss of the Oyster Creek Station Air System.

On November 16, 1971 at 9:56 a.m., while operating at a power level of 1442 Mwt, 495 MWe gross, a failure occurred in the Station Air System resulting in a complete loss of air. When the control room operator received a rod drift alarm and observed individual control rods scrambling because the scram valves fail open at 25 to 30 psig, he scrambled the reactor manually. The time lapse between the failure and the scram could not have been greater than 5 minutes. The air pressure had decreased to approximately 30 psig. As far as could be determined, all air-operated equipment operated as expected upon the loss of air.

The cause of the air system failure was the complete rupture of a 6-inch stainless steel flexible connection mounted on the discharge side of Air Compressor 1-2. When the flexible connection failed, it struck the compressor high temperature trip switch which caused the compressor to trip. Air Compressor 1-1 started automatically but was unable to keep up with the air loss.

Subsequently, Air Compressor 1-2 discharge valve was closed which isolated it from the air receiver and permitted the air pressure to build up. It is estimated that pressure was restored to normal in approximately 15 minutes. There were no spare flexible connections at the site so a solid spool piece was fabricated and installed to provide a temporary emergency back-up supply of air, and the compressor temperature switch

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was repaired. It was also noted that there was axial misalignment of the compressor discharge and the pipe connected to the receiver. This misalignment was corrected prior to installing the temporary spool piece. A rush order was placed for new flexible connections, and the temporary spool piece has been replaced with a new connection for Air Compressor 2-1. The connection will be replaced on Air Compressor 1-1 as soon as it arrives. In addition, a study has been initiated to redesign the compressor discharge piping system to prevent a recurrence of this event.

Twenty-five copies of this report are attached.

Very truly yours,

Ivan R. Finfrock, Jr.

Ivan R. Finfrock, Jr.
Manager, Nuclear Generating Stations

IRF/pk

cc: Mr. J. P. O'Reilly, Director
Division of Compliance, Region I