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General Offices: 212 West Michigan Avenue, Jackson, Michigan 49201 • Area Code 517 788-0550

March 10, 1972

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

Re: Docket No 50-255
License No DPR-20

Dear Dr. Morris:

This is written to apprise you of a problem experienced with the 1-2 emergency diesel at the Palisades Plant on February 29, 1972.

Plant Condition at the Time of the Incident

At the time the incident occurred, the reactor was in a hot shutdown condition while work was being completed on the main transformer bank (bushing replacement).

Description of Incident

The 1-2 emergency diesel was placed into operation at 0837 on February 29, 1972 to perform the monthly surveillance test. The governor control operated satisfactorily up to a load of 1.8 MWe (2.5 MWe is nominal full load), at which point the unit would not accept additional load.

The diesel was removed from service at 0943 to make necessary repairs to the unit. At this time, a cooldown of the primary system to a point less than 325°F was initiated to comply with Technical Specification requirements.

Investigation of the emergency diesel governor disclosed a broken lever arm (pawl). This was replaced with a new part and the unit returned to service at 1307 for continuation of the tests.

The effect of the broken lever arm (pawl) was to restrict load to a maximum of 1.8 MWe due to mechanical blockage of the fuel injection control mechanism.

Subsequent testing disclosed an erratic main governor. Investigation tied this problem to dirty contacts on the droop relay. The relay was replaced and the unit returned to full operability at 1800 on March 3, 1972.

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Corrective Action

The problem with the emergency governor was corrected with replacement of the defective lever arm with a modified part approximately two times as thick in the area which had broken.

Two additional lever arms are presently on order and the second diesel will be modified as soon as the material is received.

The droop relays were replaced on both units with a closed contact type which will not be affected by dust.

Conclusion

The diesel was capable of performing its safety function in spite of the droop relay failure as this is not in the circuit during an actual loss of off-site power situation.

The replacement of the lever arms on the emergency governor with one of heavier construction should avoid a recurrence of this incident.

Yours very truly,

Ralph B. Sewell (Signed)

RBS/map

Ralph B. Sewell
Nuclear Licensing Administrator

CC: Boyce H. Grier,
USAEC