

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE
37401



August 17, 1973

Mr. John F. O'Leary, Director
Directorate of Licensing
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
Washington, DC 20545



Dear Mr. O'Leary:

Subject: TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY - BROWNS FERRY NUCLEAR PLANT
UNIT 1 - DOCKET NO. 50-259 - FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE
DPR-33 - ABNORMAL OCCURRENCE REPORT BFAO-734W

The purpose of this report is to provide details concerning an incident which occurred on August 8, 1973, when the refueling zone vacuum increased to approximately 0.8 inch of water.

Description of Incident

While conducting a surveillance test on unit 1 to verify the capability of the standby gas treatment system to maintain at least 1/4 inch of water vacuum on the secondary containment after modification to secondary containment boundary doors, the modulating dampers failed to limit the refueling floor vacuum to 1/2 inch of water. The reactor was in the refueling mode, and new fuel was being removed to permit inspection of control rods. Fuel-handling operations were immediately suspended.

Investigation and Corrective Action

The trouble was traced to the slow response of the refueling zone static pressure control modulating dampers. When the refueling zone static pressure control modulating dampers actuated to maintain the 1/2-inch-water vacuum, their response time to changing vacuum conditions was too slow to prevent closure of the in-series isolation dampers set at 3/8-inch-water vacuum. Closure of the isolation dampers caused the controlling relays to deenergize, resulting in lockout which prevents further operation of the isolation dampers and static pressure control modulating dampers.

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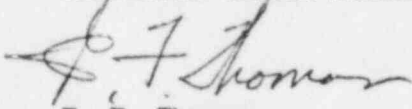
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The setting of the pressure differential switches controlling the isolation dampers has been changed from 3/8-inch-water vacuum to 1/4-inch-water vacuum. This allows the isolation dampers and static pressure control modulating dampers to operate and maintain secondary containment pressure limits. Concurrence with the setpoint change was obtained from the design engineering department. A surveillance test was satisfactorily performed following these changes, and fuel-handling operations were resumed.

Very truly yours,

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY



E. F. Thomas
Director of Power Production

CC: Mr. Norman C. Moseley, Director
Region II Regulatory Operations Office, USAEC
230 Peachtree Street, NW.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303