

December 18, 1996

CAL No. 1-96-015

Mr. Charles D. Frizzle
President
Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company
329 Bath Road
Brunswick, Maine 04011

SUBJECT: CONFIRMATORY ACTION LETTER

Dear Mr. Frizzle:

On December 5, 1996, you identified that the control wiring associated with the redundant trains of reactor manual trip pushbuttons was not separated, rendering both trains inoperable. You followed your Technical Specification and shut down the plant. This cable separation problem was found during the conduct of reviews associated with Generic Letter 96-01, Testing of Safety-Related Logic Circuits. Subsequently, you developed and implemented technical approaches to determine the extent of this problem at Maine Yankee. On at least two occasions over a 5-day period (December 6-10, 1996), you believed that the scope and breadth of your approaches had been sufficient to identify additional vulnerabilities in the plant, when in fact they were not. When additional cable separation problems were identified on December 13, 1996 that were determined to be outside of the boundary conditions for modification review you had established for determining the extent of conditions in the plant, you reevaluated and significantly revised your approach.

As of December 13, 1996, you had identified the following cable separation and testing problems:

- Inadequate separation of 125 volt DC control cables to four of eight reactor trip breakers.
- Inadequate separation of control cables from reactor trip breakers to all four manual reactor trip pushbuttons in the control room.
- Inadequate separation of control cables for the containment hydrogen analyzer system (Bendix Model).
- Inadequate train separation between control and instrument cables for the two containment hydrogen analyzer routing systems (Bendix and Compisp Models).

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- Inadequate routing of a cable for the steam generator blowdown system trip valve.
- Inadequate separation of control cables for an auxiliary steam system isolation valve (High Energy Line Break function).
- Inadequate testing of station power supply breaker auxiliary contacts in Emergency Diesel Generator, EDG-1A and EDG-1B circuits.
- Inadequate testing of the reactor trip breakers undervoltage and shunt trip coils.

To provide a high degree of confidence that you have identified and appropriately dispositioned or resolved all safety significant cable separation and logic testing vulnerabilities at Maine Yankee, and pursuant to a telephone conversation between Mr. G. Leitch, Vice President - Operations and Mr. R. Cooper, Director, Division of Reactor Projects in the Region I office on December 17, 1996, you agreed to complete the following actions prior to restarting (achieving criticality) the facility:

1. Complete the initial review, as previously committed for December 31, 1996, of Maine Yankee's testing of safety-related logic circuits pursuant to NRC Generic Letter No. 96-01.
2. Develop a plan and methodology for expanding your review to determine the extent of the cable separation problem at the facility. This plan shall ensure that all safety significant cable separation problems are identified and appropriately dispositioned or resolved pursuant to your licensing and design bases.
3. Perform, concurrently with Items 1 and 2, root cause evaluations that will address all hardware deficiencies identified, and utilize this information to validate the comprehensiveness of your corrective actions.
4. Meet with NRC representatives to describe the results and conclusions, as they pertain to the actions described above, and to gain my agreement that Maine Yankee is sufficiently prepared to restart the facility. At this meeting, you should also be prepared to discuss the adequacy of your decisions during the first several days after the plant shutdown to understand the extent of cable separation problems at Maine Yankee.

A final written report on your root cause evaluations and corrective actions will be completed at a mutually agreeable date to be discussed at the meeting noted in Item 4 above.

Pursuant to Section 182 of the Atomic Energy Act, 42 U.S.C 2232, you are required to:

1. Notify me immediately if your understanding differs from that set forth above;
2. Notify me if for any reason you cannot complete the actions within the specified schedule and advise me in writing of your modified schedule in advance of the change; and

3. Notify me in writing when you have completed the actions addressed in this Confirmatory Action Letter.

Issuance of this Confirmatory Action Letter does not preclude issuance of an order formalizing the above commitments or requiring other actions on the part of the licensee; nor does it preclude the NRC from taking enforcement action for violations of NRC requirements that may have prompted the issuance of this letter. In addition, failure to take the actions addressed in this Confirmatory Action Letter may result in enforcement action.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter, its enclosure(s), and your response will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR). To the extent possible, your response should not include any personal privacy, proprietary, or safeguards information so that it can be placed in the PDR without redaction. If personal privacy or proprietary information is necessary to provide an acceptable response, then please provide a bracketed copy of your response that identifies the information that should be protected and a redacted copy of your response that deletes such information. If you request withholding of such material, you must specifically identify the portions of your response that you seek to have withheld and provide in detail the bases for your claim of withholding (e.g., explain why the disclosure of information will create an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy or provide the information required by 10 CFR 2.790(b) to support a request for withholding confidential commercial or financial information). If safeguards information is necessary to provide an acceptable response, please provide the level of protection described in 10 CFR 73.21.

Sincerely,

Hubert J. Miller
Regional Administrator

Docket No. 50-309

cc:

G. Leitch, Vice President, Operations
J. M. Block, Attorney at Law
P. L. Anderson, Project Manager (Yankee Atomic Electric Company)
C. Shaw, Plant Manager
L. Diehl, Manager of Public and Governmental Affairs
J. A. Ritsher, Attorney (Ropes and Gray)
P. Dostie, State Nuclear Safety Inspector
P. Brann, Assistant Attorney General
U. Vanags, State Nuclear Safety Advisor
C. Brinkman, Combustion Engineering, Inc.
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There's some exposure to us based on potential differing views on 96-01 scope. 8/24/96 It should be reviewed to assure we're OK.

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