

October 23, 1996

SECY 96-224

For: The Commissioners
From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 18, 1996

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*No input this week.

Original signed by
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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

INFORMATION REPORT

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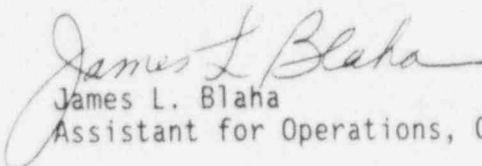
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SECY NOTE: TO BE MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE
IN 5 WORKING DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THIS PAPER

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 18, 1996

Braidwood Unit 1 - Outage for Mid-Cycle Steam Generator Inspection

Braidwood 1 was shutdown on October 11, 1996, to conduct a mid-cycle steam generator tube inspection. The eddy current inspection will use plus point probes and Eddynet95 software to determine whether there are circumferential indications at the top of the tubesheet in the roll-transition zone. During the outage, the licensee will complete in-situ pressure testing of degraded tubes with circumferential flaws and select tubes for removal in the spring 1997 refueling outage. Preliminary inspection data may be available by October 18, 1996.

Byron Unit 1 - Proposed Deletion of the Forthcoming Mid-Cycle Steam Generator Inspection

ComEd submitted a proposal on October 18, 1996, to delete the mid-cycle steam generator inspection presently scheduled for September 1997. This proposal is based on the same methodology and database contained in ComEd's August 2, 1996, submittal for Braidwood 1. Based on previous discussions with the licensee, ComEd will request a decision on this issue by the end of November. If the staff does not accept this proposal, ComEd will proceed with a spring 1997 mid-cycle inspection to avoid having both Byron 1 and Byron 2 in outages in fall 1997.

Meeting with Wolf Creek

On October 16, 1996, staff members from DRCH, DISP, DE, and RES met with representatives from Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (WCNOC) to discuss the use of ASME Section XI Code Case N-517 "Quality Assurance Program Requirements for Owners." Code Case N-517 provides an alternative to the requirement for the possession of a Certificate of Authorization or Quality System Certificate (Materials) by an Owner for the qualification of material manufacturers and suppliers, upgrading of stock materials, and acceptance of small products.

Following a discussion of the NRC safety evaluation authorizing use of Code Case N-517 with certain stipulations, WCNOC indicated that it would provide additional information for the staff to review concerning their use of the code case.

Maine Yankee

On Wednesday, October 9, 1996, Mr. Charles Frizzle, President and CEO of Maine Yankee, announced the company's Excellence Action Plan. The Plan has five primary elements: resource allocation, organization changes, enhanced Board of Directors oversight, program enhancements, and people and culture changes. Organizational changes include the creation of a new position for Vice President of Licensing & Regulatory Compliance. Mr. Frizzle stated that Maine Yankee is "launching a nationwide search to identify and recruit the most

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experienced and respected manager available for this new position." The Plan also formalizes the organizational separation of Maine Yankee from Yankee Atomic Electric Company. Enhancements to Board of Directors oversight includes the addition of Dr. Thomas Murley as the first non-owner member of the Board.

On Thursday, October 10, 1996, the Independent Safety Assessment Team (ISAT) conducted its public exit meeting at the Wiscasset Middle School. More than 250 people attended the meeting. The ISAT was represented by Ed Jordan, Team Manager, and Ellis Merschoff, Team Leader. Steve Varga and the NRR Project Manager represented NRR. The meeting was transcribed and the transcript will be placed in the PDR and LPDR. The ISAT report was issued by Chairman Jackson on Monday, October 7, 1996. The ISAT briefed the full Commission on its findings on Friday, October 18, 1996.

Sequoyah Nuclear Plant Units 1 and 2

A sudden increase (from 3 gph to 1.5 gpm) in leakoff rate from the Sequoyah Unit 2, #4 reactor coolant pump #2 seal required TVA to conduct a unit shutdown on October 11, 1996. With power having been reduced to approximately 47%, and following manual stopping of one main feedwater pump (by procedure), a continuous turbine runback and auxiliary feedwater (AFW) initiation occurred. The operators properly initiated a manual reactor trip. The runback and AFW initiation were caused by a failed main turbine impulse pressure switch in the turbine building. A number of complications, both related to and independent of the failed pressure switch occurred:

- Operators were unable to take manual control of any auxiliary feedwater level control valves. After appropriate steam generator levels were established, operators tripped the two motor driven auxiliary feedwater pumps (MDAFWPs) and placed each control switch in the Pull-to-Lock position and isolated the turbine driven auxiliary feedwater pump (TDAFWP) isolation valves to all four steam generators. This action was taken to control the cooldown of the plant.
- Following the manual reactor trip, the No. 4 main feedwater isolation valve failed to close.
- The #2 steam generator air operated main feedwater regulating valve failed to close for unknown reasons.
- The Reactor Coolant System (RCS) experienced a cooldown, because of the cold feedwater, to approximately 538°F, requiring that operators emergency borate the RCS (emergency boration is required by procedure at less than 540°F). At that time, decay heat was being removed via steam dumps to the condenser. The TDAFWP isolation valves were periodically opened to supply TDAFWP flow to the steam generators. Steam generator water levels were maintained within procedural limits at all times during this evolution.
- Following the transient, the licensee identified symptoms of a water hammer in one of the twelve lines of the steam dump system. There were

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indications of hanger damage and piping deformation. Furthermore, there was a 1 inch tear in a weld (not through wall) at the transition between the main header and the steam dump line. The licensee has indicated that they had some prior indications of water hammer.

Within about 2 hours after the manual reactor trip, normal AFW control was reestablished (by disabling the failed turbine impulse pressure switch) using the MDAFWPs.

The licensee is investigating the causes of all the above complications. Region II has augmented the resident inspector staff and NRR is assessing whether or not additional inspectors from the technical staff should be dispatched to assist in the investigation.

The initiating event that caused the RCP seal excessive leakoff on the RCP#4 is believed to be failure of an ASCO solenoid valve, specifically an o-ring in the seal return isolation valve. This valve is in a relatively harsh environment.

The impulse pressure switch failure(s) initiated both the turbine runback and the seal in feature of AFW. This circuit has a 2/2 logic, is not safety related, and is designed to cause a turbine runback on the loss of 1 MFP \geq 80% power. Initiation of the AFW pumps is to mitigate the effects of the turbine runback. The failure mechanism of the pressure switches is believed to be water intrusion from the junction box through the conduit allowing the actuators to corrode.

The failure of the feedwater isolation valve, a motor-operated valve, was failure of the motor itself. Apparently the rotor had been significantly melted. This valve had been worked on in April 1995 when the brake was replaced.

Sequoyah Unit 2 is not expected to restart until late October.

LaSalle Units 1 and 2 Work Stoppage

LaSalle Unit 1 is in a maintenance outage and Unit 2 is currently in a refueling outage. On October 12, 1996, plant management ordered a work stoppage as a result of an event which occurred that morning involving personnel error. The licensee was preparing to perform work that required them to crosstie the Division 1 and Division 2 DC power. Because of a failure to self check, the Unit 1 Division 2 was taken out of service rather than Unit 2 Division 2. This is the second work stoppage since the beginning of this refueling outage. The previous work stoppage was also due to equipment being taken out of service incorrectly. Work is limited to those activities authorized by the shift manager which are necessary to maintain safe plant conditions. As of October 16, 1996, the work stoppage was ongoing and it is not known when work will resume.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 18, 1996

Receipt of Petition for Rulemaking to Amend 10 CFR Part 70

A Petition for Rulemaking dated September 30, 1996, was received from the Nuclear Energy Institute on behalf of certain 10 CFR Part 70 licensees and potential licensees. The petitioners request that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission amend Part 70 to require certain licensees to utilize either an integrated safety assessment or an acceptable alternative approach to confirm that adequate controls are in place to protect the public health and safety.

Interagency Steering Committee on Radiation Standards Session on Comparative Risk

On October 16, 1996, the Interagency Steering Committee on Radiation Standards (ISCORS) conducted a special session on comparative risk assessment. The seminar consisted of presentations by a Division of Waste Management staff member, who summarized the interagency background paper on comparative risk prepared by the ISCORS Risk Harmonization Subcommittee. Other presentations were made by representatives of Dade Moeller and Associates, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and Resources for the Future. Discussions at the seminar attempted to answer the following questions: (1) what are the major and minor sources of radiation exposure to the public; (2) how is radiation regulated; (3) how effective are current U.S. radiation protection efforts; and (4) how might our nation do better? ISCORS member agencies will provide direction to the Risk Harmonization Subcommittee on finalization of the background paper during the week of October 21, 1996.

Presentation to the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board by the Department of Energy on Recent Developments in the Yucca Mountain Repository Project

On October 9-10, 1996, staff from the Division of Waste Management (DWM) attended a meeting of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board in Arlington, Virginia. The Department of Energy (DOE) presented information regarding possible changes to the design and performance calculations for the proposed Yucca Mountain high-level waste repository. One concept expressed by DOE was that they may employ concrete liners in shorter emplacement drifts that would be accessible from both ends. Although improving access for waste retrievability, this concept could result in significant changes to ground water chemistry as it encounters the repository and would make monitoring of the long term characteristics of the host rock more difficult. DOE will make a preliminary decision regarding what materials will be used if this concept is implemented. The decision on materials will be made by the end of the first quarter of FY97.

DOE also noted several significant changes to the repository design: (1) changes to waste package material to improve performance and reduce cost; and (2) a re-evaluation of temperature limits on the repository host rock and waste package material.

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The most noteworthy topic discussed was DOE's re-evaluation of the infiltration rate at the site. DOE representatives presented arguments for infiltration estimates from 1 to 10 mm/yr based on 7 lines of evidence, much higher than previous estimates of 0.01 to 1 mm/yr. Higher infiltration could lead to wetter conditions in the repository during the postclosure period. DOE noted possible modifications to the thermal loading strategy presented in the Advanced Conceptual Design Report to offset the effects of higher infiltration: (1) increase thermal load to cause more dry-out of the repository or (2) lower thermal load and increase robustness of waste package. DOE also re-evaluated its 1995 total system repository performance with a much higher infiltration rate of 7 mm/yr and found the performance to be within acceptable limits. DWM staff is currently evaluating these new estimates of infiltration and DOE's reassessment of repository performance in the context of the Total System Performance Assessment Key Technical Issue.

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Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
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Week Ending October 18, 1996

Preliminary Notifications (PNs)

- a. PNO-II-96-071, Tennessee Valley Authority (Sequoyah 2), SHUTDOWN IN EXCESS OF 72 HOURS
- b. PNO-II-96-072, Cat Engineering Consultants (An Agreement State Licensee), STOLEN MOISTURE DENSITY GAUGE
- c. PNO-IV-96-055, VA Medical Center, LOST AMERICIUM-241 SOURCE
- d. PNO-IV-96-056, Department of the Army (White Sands Missile Range), DAMAGED SHIPPING PACKAGE

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Office of Administration
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Visitors Information Profile (VIP) System

VIP system operations were started in OWFN on October 17, 1996. VIP allows for easy pre-registration of NRC visitors and speeds up the visitor badging process when they arrive. VIP has operated successfully for several months in TWFN.

Meeting on DOE's Tritium Program at NRC Licensed Facilities

The Division of Security (SEC) is reviewing an October 4, 1996, DOE letter to NRC regarding DOE's agreement with two NRC licensees to provide irradiation services for lead test assemblies in support of the DOE Commercial Light Water Project. The letter requests NRC's concurrence on understandings regarding access authorizations for licensee personnel and requirements for a facility security clearance. SEC will prepare an outline of possible issues and schedule a meeting with representatives from OGC, NRR, OE and Region II to consider NRC's response to the letter.

Adjustment of Civil Monetary Penalties for Inflation (Parts 2 and 13)

A final rule that amends NRC regulations to adjust the maximum civil monetary penalties that may be imposed under statutes under NRC jurisdiction, was published in the Federal Register on October 11, 1996 (61 FR 53554). The amendments in the final rule are required by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996. The final rule becomes effective November 12, 1996.

Policy and Procedure for Enforcement Action; Policy Statement

A document that amends the NRC's General Statement of Policy and Procedure for Enforcement Actions was published in the Federal Register on October 11, 1996. The amendments address requirements imposed by the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 that require agencies to adjust civil monetary penalties to account for the effects of inflation. The amendments become effective November 12, 1996.

Significant FOIA Requests Received during the 4-Day Period of October 11 - October 17, 1996:

Copies of specifically identified exhibits related to OI reports 2-94-036 and 2-94-036S on Florida Power's Crystal River plant. (D.Calandra of Winston & Strawn; FOIA-96-408)

Records related to Stan A. Huber Consultants technical assistance request regarding casking of depleted uranium. (J.Mitchell of Katten Muchin & Zavis; FOIA-96-409)

Records related to ALLRW Inc.'s license application for a storage and brokerage facility in the Village of Rockdale, IL. (J.Mitchell of Katten Muchin & Zavis; FOIA-96-410)

Copies of Wolf Creek's Licensee Event Report No. 88-028 with all supplements & revisions. (M. O'Mealia; FOIA-96-411)

Copies of 6 specifically identified records associated with Maine Yankee. (Individual; FOIA-96-414)

Copies of OI reports 4-95-072, 4-95-067, and RIV-95-A-0247. (Individual; FOIA-96-415)

Copies of reports on nuclear tests and its effect on participating Army personnel between 1950 and 1954. (Individual; FOIA-96-416)

Copies of Shieldalloy's license renewal and supporting documents. (S.Bauman; Save Wills Creek; FOIA-96-417)

Copies of NRC's technical review comments on Scientech Inc.'s proposal for request for procurement action no. RS-RES-96-060. (R.Killoren; Penn State; FOIA-96-418)

Copy of electronic version of NUREG/BR-0230. (O.Williams; J/R/A Associates; FOIA-96-419)

Office of Personnel
Items of Interest
Week Ending October 18, 1996

Elderly Care Support Group Meeting Held

On October 16, 1996, the Organizational Development and Training staff sponsored a meeting of the Support Group for Elderly Care. The featured speaker was Dr. Elzo Parnell, Ph.D., R.N., of the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Washington Chapter, Bethesda, Maryland. Coordinated by Barbara A. Mack of the training staff, Dr. Parnell focused on the disease of Alzheimer's, its origin, definition and scope, symptoms, and treatment. Of the twenty-one persons in attendance, ten had relatives affected by the disease.

Arrivals

NONE

Departures

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OFFICE AUTOMATION ASST (OPFT)

NRR

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Office of Public Affairs
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Media Interest

Chairman Jackson was interviewed by the St. Petersburg Times, Florida, on the St. Lucie tampering incident and safety concerns relative to deregulation.

Press Releases

Headquarters:

- 96-141 NRC Increases Penalty Limits Against Licensees
- 96-142 NRC Sets Public Meeting on Strategic Assessment Initiative
- 96-143 24th Annual NRC Water Reactor Safety Information Meeting To Be Held Oct. 21-23 in Bethesda, MD
- 96-144 Note to Editors - ACRS Meeting Rescheduled
- 96-145 NRC Asks Utility Licensees for Information on Concrete Containment Foundation at Nine Nuclear Plants

Regions:

- I-96-68 NRC Staff Rates Ginna "Good" in Three Areas and "Excellent" in One Category on Latest SALP Report
- Note to Editors: NRC Postpones October 18 Meeting With Haddam Neck
- II-96-85 NRC Staff Holds Predecisional Enforcement Conference to Discuss Brunswick Equipment Concerns With CP&L
- III-96-63 Aerial Radiation Measurements Planned for Nuclear Power Plants in Wisconsin and Minnesota
- III-96-64 LaSalle Nuclear Station Rated "Acceptable" in Three Areas, "Good," in Fourth Area in Latest NRC Assessment Report
- IV-96-56 NRC, Supply System Officials to Discuss Apparent Violations at WNP-2
- IV-96-57 NRC Asks for Public Input on Agency's Strategic Direction

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Office of International Programs
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Foreign Visitors

On October 15, Jeff Leaver, General Manager of the Council for Nuclear Safety (CNS) of South Africa, visited Chairman Jackson, Commissioner Rogers and David Morrison, RES. Mr. Leaver informed the Commissioners of the anticipated revisions to the Nuclear Energy Law of South Africa including making CNS a fully independent agency. They also discussed regulation by risk assessment as practiced in South Africa and risk informed regulation as practiced in the U.S. Mr. Leaver mentioned his Council's work in using a risk based approach to physical security provisions.

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Region I
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Power Inspection Enforcement Conference

On October 18, 1996, Region I held a pre-decisional enforcement conference with the president/owner of Power Inspection, Inc (PI). The conference was held to discuss the findings of an NRC inspection conducted on December 2 and 3, 1993, and a subsequent investigation by NRC's Office of Investigations (OI). The OI investigation identified wrongdoing by six individuals, and several apparent violations were identified by the Region I staff. Pre-decisional enforcement conferences were held with two of the individuals on October 1 and 2. The other individuals declined the conference or could not be contacted. This pre-decisional enforcement conference is the last individual conference. Enforcement action against the licensee and the individuals will be considered following the Conference.

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Region II
Items of Interest
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Florida Power Corporation - Crystal River

On October 16, 1996, Region II participated in the Crystal River full-scale emergency exercise. The Region responded with a full base team and site team.

Fundamentals of Inspection Refresher Course

On October 15, 1996, Region II and the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) completed a Fundamentals of Inspection Refresher Course. The purpose of the session was to provide senior management expectations and insights into changes being made in the fuel cycle and/or materials inspection area. The session was lead by a senior manager in NMSS and included topics in lessons learned from recent events, strategic assessment direction, changes in materials licensing process, allegation followup and guidance on risk-informed, performance based inspections.

Florida Power and Light Company - Turkey Point

On October 17, 1996, Region II personnel were closely tracking the progress of Hurricane Lili, and Resident Inspectors were onsite monitoring licensee activities. Although Hurricane Lili winds were not projected at the Turkey Point site the licensee completed preparations for the hurricane. Additional Region II personnel who were at St. Lucie and Crystal River were designated to support the Turkey Point Resident staff as needed. The Emergency Response Vehicle which was at the Crystal River site for the EP exercise, was repositioned at the St. Lucie site in order to respond as necessary. The Region II State Agreement Officer was at the State Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee, Florida. On the afternoon of October 18, 1996, when Hurricane Lili turned east, away from the continental United States, the deployed personnel stood down, and the emergency van returned to Atlanta.

Babcock and Wilcox - Naval Nuclear Fuel Division Begins Downblending of Kazakhstan Uranium

Babcock and Wilcox (B&W) has been working under a government contract to blend high and low enriched uranium to produce uranium of four percent enrichment for use in the nuclear fuel cycle. B&W began initial "hot testing" of the equipment to be used to downblend uranyl nitrate solutions made up of dissolved Kazakhstan uranium on September 24, 1996.

The downblending was temporarily interrupted on October 15, when a spill of approximately 80 liters of four percent enriched uranyl nitrate solution occurred from the downblending equipment. The spill was contained in equipment designed for such an event so there were no criticality safety implications. The solution was returned to the downblend equipment and the area was cleaned on the same day. None of the workers in the area was contaminated. The spill occurred when a sampling connection broke as plastic tubing was being attached to the end of the sampling tap.

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Region III
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ABB Combustion Engineering, Inc. Management Meeting

A management meeting was held in the Region III Office, Lisle, Illinois, on October 16, 1996, between NRC Region III senior managers and ABB Combustion Engineering, Inc., senior managers. The meeting discussion focused on the recent Augmented Inspection Team findings. The licensee's investigation of the chemical reaction event, the root causes identified and corrective actions were discussed. The licensee presented a comprehensive corrective action program which addressed specific root causes for the event as well as broad, facility-wide issues. NRC Region III meeting participants included Acting Deputy Regional Administrator William Axelson, Director of the Division of Nuclear Materials Safety Cindy Pederson and Headquarters Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards Branch Chief Philip Ting.

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Region IV
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Steam Generator Replacement Meeting with HL&P

On October 15, 1996, South Texas Project representatives presented the Region IV staff with an overview of their planned Unit 1 steam generator replacement project. The actual replacement of the steam generators is currently scheduled to take place during the refueling outage in 2000. The licensee's presentation included a conceptual video depicting the major evolutions of the project. The licensee had presented this information to NRR personnel in September 1996.

FSAR Meeting with HL&P

On October 17, 1996, members of HL&P's licensing and design engineering staff met with Region IV staff members to provide an update of their FSAR review. The licensee has been working on the review of their FSAR and wanted to inform the Region of the status of the review and current findings. No significant issues have been identified at this time. The licensee indicated that they expect their review to be completed at the end of 1997.

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