



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

INFORMATION REPORT

November 6, 1996

SECY 96-229

For: The Commissioners
From: James L. Blaha, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING NOVEMBER 1, 1996

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

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 1, 1996

Review of GL 89-10 on Motor-Operated Valve Capability and GL 95-07 on Pressure Locking of Gate Valves at Nine Mile Point

During October 1996, Region I has been evaluating the motor-operated valve (MOV) program at the Nine Mile Point (NMP) nuclear power plant developed in response to Generic Letter (GL) 89-10, "Safety-Related Motor-Operated Valve Testing and Surveillance." Region I also addressed specific aspects of the licensee's response to GL 95-07, "Pressure Locking and Thermal Binding of Safety-Related Power-Operated Gate Valves." The NRR Mechanical Engineering Branch (EMEB) provided a contractor from the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory to assist directly in the NMP inspection. The EMEB staff also has provided assistance through telephone conferences, review of licensee documentation, and participation at a meeting in Region I with the licensee on October 25, 1996.

During the NMP inspection, the staff found weaknesses in the licensee's justification for its design-basis assumptions for valve factors, stem friction coefficients, and rate of loading effects, and in the evaluation of potential pressure locking of certain gate valves. In response to these staff concerns, the licensee developed justification for the capability of its safety-related MOVs at Unit 1 (currently operating) and Unit 2 (currently shutdown). The staff believes that the licensee has justified: the operability of its safety-related MOVs; its present schedule to complete the GL 89-10 program at Unit 1 by the Spring of 1997; and its plan to restart Unit 2 with subsequent close-out of its GL 89-10 program in the next couple of months. With respect to GL 95-07 for Unit 1, the licensee has relied primarily on valve modification to resolve pressure locking issues. Regarding GL 95-07 for Unit 2, the licensee recently modified 4 valves to prevent pressure locking in response to staff concerns regarding the licensee's analytical approach to this phenomenon. At this time, the staff has not identified any other near-term concerns regarding pressure locking for Units 1 and 2, and is continuing its review of the licensee's response to GL 95-07. EMEB/NRR and Region I intend to complete our review of the licensee's response to GLs 89-10 and 95-07 for Units 1 and 2 in the Spring of 1997.

Braidwood Units 1 and 2 - Update On The 480 Volt Breaker Failures

On October 28, 1996, the NRC staff held another conference call with Braidwood to get an update on the results of their 480 volt Westinghouse DS-206 circuit breaker testing. This testing was initiated because, since September 24, 1996, two out of 22 safety-related 480 volt circuit breakers failed to close during surveillance testing at Braidwood. The licensee selected four breakers for additional testing onsite and sent the two failed breakers to Westinghouse for a more investigative test. Two NRR inspectors traveled to Westinghouse to observe this testing.

Although the investigation is not complete, it appears that degradation of factory installed lubrication as well as lack of adequate maintenance by the

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licensee are believed to have been contributors to the breaker malfunctions. The licensee is investigating the root cause of lubrication problems.

In addition to the breaker lubrication issues, the NRC is concerned about the adequacy of testing under degraded voltages. On October 22, 1996, a breaker failed to close during testing at a reduced control power voltage of 95 volts dc. The licensee has not completed its testing of the breakers yet. The NRC intends to have additional calls with the licensee when their testing is completed and during their root cause analysis. The R-III inspectors are reviewing the minimum required voltage for breaker operation and the licensee's electrical maintenance practices to identify any weaknesses that may have contributed to this problem.

Region III and NRR are evaluating this issue to determine if these failures are plant specific or generic. Additional information regarding these failures can be found in the, October 23, 1996, and October 2, 1996, Director's Highlights and Morning Report 3-96-0110.

Dresden Unit 3 Shutdown

On October 26, 1996, at 5:58 p.m. (CDT), the 3B reactor recirculation pump motor generator (MG) set tripped. The control room operators stabilized the plant in single loop operation at about 34 percent power. During the transient, reactor parameters remained within operational limits and all equipment functioned as designed with no additional complications. The initial indications were that an electrical ground was the cause of the 3B MG set trip. The licensee is investigating the root cause the MG set trip.

The licensee determined that recovery of the idle loop was not possible and commenced a shutdown to Cold Shutdown. The forced outage is expected to last 3 - 4 weeks. The resident inspection staff, assisted by members of the NRC's Independent Special Inspection Team, will continue to monitor the licensee's activities during the outage.

Lasalle Units 1 and 2 - SALP Management Meeting Held

On October 29, 1996, NRC management met with Commonwealth Edison corporate and plant management in a public meeting to discuss the SALP for the period from November 27, 1994 through August 3, 1996. The licensee received ratings of "3" in Operations, Maintenance and Engineering, and "2" in Plant Support. This represents a decline in performance in Operations and Engineering and an improvement in Plant Support from the previous SALP. The licensee agreed with the assessment and discussed many changes and initiatives designed to improve performance. The NRC categorized many of the performance issues as being similar to those observed in the previous SALP and emphasized the need for sustained improvement.

James A. Fitzpatrick Nuclear Power Plant - Indian Point Nuclear Generating Unit 3

The New York Power Authority (NYPA) and Entergy Corporation have ceased negotiation of a contract for Entergy to provide management services for NYPA's two nuclear power plants.

Despite the parties' best efforts, they were unable to agree on the business terms of the contract, particularly the allocation of costs and financial incentives between the two sides. NYPA and Entergy have concluded their negotiations on amicable terms.

Thorough assessments of the plants by Entergy identified no major barriers to the agreement, which would have been the first of its kind in the nation.

Maine Yankee

Maine Yankee (MY) is operating at 90% power under the restriction of the January 3, 1996, Confirmatory Order.

By letter dated October 18, 1996, the licensee responded to the staff's June 25, 1996, request for additional information (RAI) regarding the Maine Yankee SBLOCA analysis. The response included both proprietary and non-proprietary versions. By letter dated October 28, 1996, the staff issued a new RAI regarding the Maine Yankee SBLOCA analysis. Additional RAIs regarding the containment pressure analysis are awaiting licensee response. The licensee expects to respond to the remaining containment pressure analysis questions by December 1, 1996, and to submit the analysis results by May 1, 1997.

The SBLOCA and containment pressure analysis issues must be resolved before the staff will consider a request to increase the thermal power limit above 2440 MWt. The licensee must also resolve equipment operability concerns at higher power levels that were raised by the Independent Safety Assessment Team. Additional issues may be identified by the power uprate review being conducted by the Maine Yankee lessons learned team in DSSA. After the lessons learned team completes its work, the staff will develop a letter to the licensee to document items required to be resolved before staff consideration of operation at power levels above 2440 MWt.

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 1, 1996

Meeting with Western Nuclear, Inc. on Windblown Contamination at the Split Rock Site

On October 29, 1996, at the request of the licensee, Western Nuclear, Inc., staff from the Division of Waste Management met with representatives of the licensee and its consultants to discuss issues arising from the cleanup of windblown contamination at the Split Rock mill tailings site in Wyoming. The issues discussed included: (1) results from the completion of radiation verification in several areas that were previously identified as incomplete; (2) review of the various areas around the site that have had accessible contamination removed; (3) impact of the total volume of contaminated material cleaned up to date on the configuration of the reclaimed tailings; (4) redesign of the radon barrier over the areas remaining to be covered; and (5) areas where windblown soil cleanup is not reasonably achievable. The licensee intends to propose alternatives to the requirements of 10 CFR Part 40, Appendix A, based on various factors including the specific site conditions. The licensee plans to make a written submittal relative to the issues ahead of the original January 10, 1997, target date in an attempt to meet a March 1, 1997, construction start date.

Meeting with National Mining Association on Upcoming Uranium Recovery Industry Meeting

On October 22, 1996, staff from the Division of Waste Management met with representatives of the National Mining Association (NMA) at Nuclear Regulatory Commission Headquarters. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss items related to the upcoming uranium recovery industry meeting, jointly sponsored by the NRC and NMA. This industry meeting, which is scheduled to be held at NRC Headquarters on November 13-14, 1996, will provide a forum for all participants to discuss relevant issues. Based on discussions during the meeting with NMA, a final agenda for the industry meeting is in preparation and will be transmitted to all uranium recovery licensees, as well as to representatives of affected States, the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other interested parties.

Meeting with Union Pacific Bear Creek Uranium Company

On October 21, 1996, staff from the Division of Waste Management met with representatives of Union Pacific Bear Creek Uranium Company to discuss the status of reclamation and groundwater clean-up at the Bear Creek Uranium Mill site located near Glen Rock, Wyoming. Bear Creek requested the meeting as a follow-up to an amendment request to terminate its groundwater corrective action program and to place its final radon barrier to meet the December 31, 1997, license requirement which was set in response to Environmental Protection Agency 40 CFR 61, Subpart T. Because of the location of pumpback impoundments on top of the reclaimed tailings, Bear Creek cannot place its final radon barrier until groundwater corrective action is complete. Based on review of the licensee's request, the staff concluded that groundwater at the

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site has not been cleaned-up to baseline conditions. The staff provided the licensee with a number of suggestions, including considering submittal of a request for approval of Alternate Concentration Limits. Bear Creek representatives plan to consider the suggestions by the staff and to submit a proposal early in calendar year 1997.

Native American Computer Training

On October 21-24, 1996, staff from the Division of Waste Management and the Office of Information Resources Management provided instruction to 37 individuals representing 29 different Tribes and organizations through training sessions offered at the Annual Convention of the National Congress of American Indians in Phoenix, Arizona. This training provided participants with the background and skills necessary to use computers to access electronically-available Nuclear Regulatory Commission information and to electronically participate in NRC regulatory activities. Participants had the opportunity to develop hands-on experience using computers and to become comfortable with tools that will facilitate their active involvement in NRC regulatory activities. This training was developed to complement an NRC technology transfer program that has distributed 51 excess computers among 17 Tribes with an identified interest in NRC high-level waste activities.

Physical Protection Licensing Workshop

A Security Licensing Workshop was conducted by the International Safeguards Section the week of October 21-25, 1996. This workshop was presented to Ukrainian Regulatory and Facility Safeguards personnel as part of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. The workshop was followed by a safeguards tour of the Calvert Cliff's nuclear power plant.

Meeting with Siemens Power Corporation Re: Plutonium Fuel

On October 23, 1996, representatives of Siemens Power Corporation met with Division of Fuel Cycle Safety and Safeguards staff to discuss Siemens' plans to pursue a contract with the Department of Energy (DOE) to produce mixed oxide fuel from weapons plutonium. Issues discussed at the meeting included the role of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in activities on DOE property, the identification of utilities that would purchase and use the mixed-oxide fuel, and licensing requirements for a plutonium fuel production facility. This facility would be licensed under 10 CFR Part 70, which contains requirements for plutonium facilities that are more extensive than those for uranium fuel production facilities. Siemens holds an NRC license for uranium fuel production at their Richland Engineering and Manufacturing Facility, and would require a new license for this plutonium facility if they were the selected contractor.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 1, 1996

Guidance on Setpoints for Safety-Related Instrumentation

A draft Regulatory Guide, "Setpoints for Safety-Related Instrumentation," proposed Revision 3 to Regulatory Guide 1.105, was issued this week for public comment. The comment period will expire on December 31, 1996. This guide describes an acceptable method for ensuring that setpoints for safety-related instrumentation are initially within and remain within the technical specification limits. Instrument setpoint uncertainty allowances and setpoint discrepancies are problems that have led to a number of operational problems.

The staff proposes to endorse a national consensus standard- Part 1 of ISA-S67.04-1994, "Setpoints for Nuclear Safety-Related Instrumentation," with minor exceptions and clarification.

Fall 1996 Cooperative Severe Accident Research Program (CSARP)

The annual Fall 1996 Cooperative Severe Accident Research Program (CSARP) Management Meeting was held on October 24, 1996, at the Bethesda Marriott Hotel Bethesda, Maryland. Each year this Fall meeting provides an important opportunity for the principals from the various nations involved in our exchange arrangements to hear about recent progress and near term plans on NRC research and to get together with the NRC research project managers. It also provides a forum for international communication on severe accident technical issues and for organizational developments of CSARP arrangements.

The CSARP partners were brought up to date on NRC research in the following principal areas of:

- Lower Head Integrity,
- Direct Containment Heating (DCH),
- Fuel-coolant Interactions (FCI),
- Hydrogen Transport and Combustion,
- Steam Generator Tube Performance, and
- Major Severe Accident Computer Codes.

The meeting was attended by individuals from 18 countries including the USA.

Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data
Items of Interest
Week Ending November 1, 1996

Preliminary Notifications (PNs)

- a. PNO-I-96-075, Babcock & Wilcox, CONTAMINATED EQUIPMENT RETURNED FROM OFFSITE
- b. PNO-I-96-076, Rochester Gas & Electric Corp., (Ginna 1), GINNA SHUTDOWN TO REPLACE MAIN TRANSFORMER
- c. PNO-I-96-077, PA Power & Light Co., (Susquehanna 1), SUSQUEHANNA UNIT SHUTDOWN FOR REPAIRS
- d. PNO-I-96-078, GPU Nuclear Corp., (Oyster Creek 1), PLANT SHUTDOWN FOR GREATER THAN 3 DAYS DUE TO VITAL POWER CABLE FAILURE
- e. PNO-II-96-074, ABB Industrial Systems, Inc., EXTREMITY EXPOSURE
- f. PNO-III-96-064, Consumers Power Co., (Big Rock Point 1), SHUTDOWN FOR EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALIFICATION DATA
- g. PNO-III-96-065, St. John's Medical Center, THERAPEUTIC MEDICAL MISADMINISTRATION
- h. PNO-III-96-066, Commonwealth Edison Co., (Dresden 3), SHUTDOWN FOR RECIRCULATION PUMP MOTOR-GENERATOR REPAIRS AND OTHER MAINTENANCE
- i. PNO-IV-96-058A, Entergy Operations, Inc., (Arkansas Nuclear 1), FIRE IN CONTAINMENT - UPDATE
- j. PNO-IV-96-059, Dept. Health & Human Services (Nat'l. Inst. of Diabetes), LOSS OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL

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Office of Administration
Items of Interest
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Procurement Reform

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has requested each federal agency to develop a plan for utilizing procurement performance measures. In response to OMB's request, the Division of Contracts (DC) established a working group with representation from each NRC program office and developed a list of performance measures which focus on customer satisfaction, acquisition training, Procurement Reinvention Laboratory innovations, financial management, and federal-wide initiatives. DC will use these measures to identify best practices and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the procurement process.

Significant FOIA Requests Received during the 5-Day Period of October 25 - October 31, 1996:

Copy of complaints filed by named individual with supporting documentation against Florida Power and Light. (Individual; FOIA-96-445)

Copy of the investigative file regarding Glenda K. Miller v. Tennessee Valley Authority. (Individual; FOIA-96-446)

Copies of documents gathered by NRR regarding plant security system concerns identified by requester at TVA's Browns Ferry, Sequoyah, and Watts Bar sites. (Individual; FOIA-96-449)

Listing, by state, of well logging/wireline licensees for non-agreement states. (S.Lewis of Lewis & Associates; FOIA-96-450)

Records regarding requests or applications for waste disposal at the International Technology Corp.'s Panoche Class I Hazardous Waste Facility in Solano County, CA. (Mayor Jerry Hayes; City of Benicia; FOIA-96-451)

Copies of predecisional enforcement conference transcripts for 3/28/96 and 4/4/96 for named individuals related to an incident at Crystal River site. (Individual; FOIA-96-452)

Copy of all licensee responses to NRC deadlines for compliance with "Timeliness in Decommissioning of Materials Facilities." (S.Walker; Arthur D. Little, Inc.; FOIA-96-453)

Copy of a July 22, 1996 letter to NRC from Sherwood Bauman regarding the Shieldalloy Metallurgical Corp. (D. Patterson of Beveridge & Diamond; FOIA-96-454)

Listing of documents related to Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (J. Mallia; Boston Herald; FOIA-96-455)

Office of Personnel
Items of Interest
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Arrivals

NONE

Retirements

BUTCHER, Ross
DUBE, Nancy
DUBE, Robert
ROTH, Jerome

SR RESIDENT INSPECTOR (PFT)
CHIEF, PROGRAM SUPPORT BRANCH (PFT)
SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER (PFT)
SECTION CHIEF (PFT)

RII
OGC
NRR
NMSS

Departures

NONE

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Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
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Press Releases

Headquarters:

- 96-155 NRC Terminates License for Decommissioned Reactor at Brigham Young University
- 96-156 NRC's Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste to Meet November 12 and 13 in Rockville, MD

Regions:

- I-96-71 Parts of Local Public Document Room for Three Mile Island and Peach Bottom Nuclear Plants are Reopened
- I-96-72 Note to Editors: AIT report on Haddam Neck
- II-96-89 NRC Schedules Special Inspection Exit Meeting at St. Lucie Plant; NRC Also Schedules St. Lucie Corrective Action Meeting in Atlanta
- III-96-67 Perry Nuclear Station Rated "Good" in Four Areas in Latest NRC Assessment Report
- III-96-68 NRC Staff Schedules Two-Day Public Meeting in Chicago Area on Strategic Assessment Initiative
- IV-96-58 NRC Proposes \$13,000 Fine Against CTI Alaska, Inc., for Radiation Worker Exposure Incident

Office of International Programs
Items of Interest
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Visit by Japanese Delegation

On October 30, 1996, a delegation from Japan, consisting primarily of mayors, deputy mayors, Chairmen of Town Assemblies and related citizens whose jurisdictions include operating or planned nuclear power plants visited NRC. The delegation held discussions with NRR staff on a number of topics, including criteria and regulations concerning decommissioning, nuclear power plant license extension and licensing of ALWRs. The delegation, which will also visit other agencies, is in the United States to study current nuclear fuel cycle activities and nuclear licensing.

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Region I
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Outreach to Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

On October 29, 1996, Dr. Mohamed Shanbaky, DNMS Branch Chief, provided refresher training on 10 CFR 20 to inspectors from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The training included a valuable exchange of information regarding the implementation of the radiation safety regulation during inspections and licensing. The training was part of the Region's outreach to the State, which has initiated the process of becoming an NRC Agreement State.

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Region II
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Tennessee Valley Authority - Browns Ferry and Watts Bar

Browns Ferry 2 automatically scrambled on October 29, 1996 due to a failed generator exciter brush. No ECCS systems were required to actuate. A question was raised as to whether the Safety Relief Valves should have actuated based upon the peak reactor pressure. The unit was taken to cold shutdown and a sample of 4/13 SRVs will be removed and tested as-found at the Wylie Laboratory to verify lift setpoint. The licensee had a previously requested TS change to increase the allowable setpoint tolerance from 1% to 3%.

On October 30, 1996, Watts Bar managers met with NRC in the Region II office to discuss plant performance since commercial operations commenced. In general the plant has operated with no significant problems. The plant operated reliably for 117 continuous days prior to a scheduled mid-cycle outage. The outage was conducted well and the plant is back online. The licensee is focusing improvement efforts in the areas of configuration status control, security, operator burdens, chemistry, and thermal performance.

Florida Power Corporation - Crystal River 3

On October 28, 1996, the Florida Power Corporation informed the NRC staff by correspondence of their plans to address eight technical issues before restart. On October 31, 1996, the Region II staff conducted a public management meeting with the licensee at the Crystal River facility. The principle topics of discussion at this meeting were the licensee's changes to strengthen their Engineering reorganization and their Quality Assurance process. On November 1, 1996, the Region II Administrator chartered a Restart Panel under the provisions of Inspection Manual Chapter 0350, to coordinate NRC resources in determining restart readiness and to provide a record of regulatory actions leading to restart. The Restart Panel is joint participation effort by NRR and the Region.

Baxter HealthCare - Safety Interlock Disabled On Roof Plug

On October 29, 1996, Region II inspectors identified that two roof plug interlock switches had been disabled at the licensee's facility in Puerto Rico. The facility is an irradiator room with approximately 4 million curies of cobalt-60. The sources are raised and lowered into a pool of water for storage. The roof plug switches are part of the safety system to assure that the sources return to safe storage in the pool if the roof plug is removed.

Two wires from the roof plug interlock switches were found to be disconnected, and the roof plug interlock wires leading to the control console were spliced, bypassing the failed switches. The roof plug is removed once a year for Co-60 replacement and was in place at the time of the discovery. The roof plug was last removed during source replacement in December of 1995.

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In addition to the disabled interlocks, NRC found two failed switches during testing of the safety system for product carrier collision with the source rack. The licensee, in consultation with the irradiator manufacturer, replaced the defective switches during the inspection, restoring operability to the safety systems.

Region II inspectors verified that safety systems were operational during the inspection. Region II issued a Confirmatory Action Letter to the licensee on October 31, 1996.

General Electric-Uranium Material Accumulation in Ventilation

On October 30, 1996, the licensee reported, to the NRC Operations Center, the discovery of the accumulation of material, containing, uranium-235, in ductwork downstream from a process scrubber. The scrubber is used to remove uranium that may be exhausted into the ductwork from centrifuge operations in the chemical processing area. The licensee estimated the quantity of uranium in the accumulated material to be 16.6 kilograms of approximately three percent uranium-235.

Licensee examination of the process exhaust scrubber revealed that the water spray nozzle was partially plugged, reducing the efficiency. The scrubber and ductwork on the other, four process lines were inspected. Two spray nozzles were partially plugged and one nozzle was not installed properly. Material removed from the various ducts ranged from 2 kilograms to 17 kilograms total weight.

As corrective actions, the licensee cleaned all nozzles and installed them properly. An inspection of the scrubber water flow each shift was initiated. Process lines restarted on the evening of October 30, 1996.

Duke Power Company - McGuire

On October 30, an orderly shutdown of McGuire Units 1 and 2 was initiated. The shutdowns were required by Technical Specifications (TS) after the "C" battery failed to meet the required capacity criteria during a modified performance test. The battery is one of the four AT&T lead acid round cell vital batteries at McGuire. The battery testing resulted in a demonstration of 78.5 percent capacity which is lower than the 80 percent required by TS. The decrease in capacity was unexpected and indicated that the battery has degraded since installation in 1991. The licensee is currently developing plans to return the "C" battery to operability. Additionally, due to concerns regarding the performance of the round cell batteries, the licensee is evaluating actions to demonstrate the operability of the other battery banks.