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February 10, 1997

Mr. J. S. Perry
Site Vice President
Dresden Station
Commonwealth Edison Company
6500 North Dresden Road
Morris, IL 60450

Dear Mr. Perry:

Enclosed for your review is the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) 14 Report for the Dresden Nuclear Power Station, covering the period March 19, 1995, through December 28, 1996. This report will be discussed with you at a public meeting to be held at the Dresden Training Facility, at 10:00 a.m. (CST) Friday, February 21, 1997.

During this meeting you are encouraged candidly to discuss any comments you may have regarding our report. While this meeting is considered a presentation and discussion forum between Commonwealth Edison Company and the NRC, the meeting will be opened to any other interested parties as observers. In accordance with NRC policy, I have reviewed the recommendations from the SALP Board assessment and concur with their ratings. The functional areas of plant operations and plant support were rated Category 2; maintenance and engineering areas were rated Category 3. The current SALP ratings reflect an improved performance in plant operations and with some performance decline in maintenance and surveillance activities. It is my view that the conduct of nuclear activities in connection with the Dresden facility was adequate and overall performance continues to improve.

During the previous (SALP 13) assessment period, performance was cyclical and was declining near the end of the period. The efforts to reinvigorate your improvement initiatives during the SALP 14 period resulted in overall improved performance. During the assessment period, you continued to utilize the "Dresden Plan" to focus on problem areas. One of these focus areas, conduct of operations, achieved significant improvement.

Improvements noted in the operations area resulted from implementing effective performance standards and improved procedural adherence by control room operators. Strong management support of conservative decision making was clearly demonstrated during the assessment period when, on several occasions, operating units were shut down or remained shut down until root causes and corrective actions were implemented for equipment problems. While significant sustained improvements were demonstrated by control room operators, operations performance outside the control room has not yet achieved the same level of success.

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Many improvements in plant material condition were made over the assessment period during extended maintenance outages including upgrades to the feedwater level control system, installation of the station blackout modifications, and replacement of the Unit 2 reactor water cleanup system piping and heat exchanger. However, overall plant performance continued to be challenged by persistent weaknesses rooted in material condition, work control, test control, and the quality of some maintenance activities. Equipment performance problems for important systems and components, such as the high pressure coolant injection system, the safety-related 4kV circuit breakers, the feedwater system, and the control room emergency ventilation system led to forced shutdowns, plant transients, and reduced safety system availability and reliability. Additionally, significant deficiencies were identified in the surveillance and test programs this assessment period. These deficiencies, along with the continued problems in material condition, work control, and quality of some maintenance activities, led to the Category 3 rating in Maintenance.

The overall quality of engineering support to plant operations improved, particularly support from system engineers. Positive initiatives included improving plant system engineers' capabilities, and focusing resources to improve material condition and reduce engineering backlogs. However, some significant errors in maintaining the design basis of the containment cooling service water system and in the adequacy of a number of plant design basis calculations were identified. Other weaknesses, such as the inconsistent quality of engineering work, the inability to resolve some long-standing design problems, and the lack of aggressive resolution of some nonconforming conditions until prompting by the NRC, led to the Category 3 rating in Engineering.

Good performance in chemistry, emergency preparedness, and fire protection, and improved performance in the control of personnel exposures and contaminated areas indicate some success with your improvement initiatives in the area of Plant Support. However, continued examples of radworker performance deficiencies were observed during this assessment period.

You are requested to respond in writing within 30 days after the SALP meeting, specifically addressing corrective actions planned to improve your performance in the areas of maintenance and engineering. You should also be prepared to discuss our assessments and your plans in these areas, as well as your plant performance expectations during the SALP meeting.

In accordance with Section 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," Part 2, Title 10, *Code of Federal Regulations*, a copy of this letter, the SALP report, and your response to this letter will be placed in the NRC's Public Document Room.

Should you have any questions concerning the SALP report, we would be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
A. Bill Beach

A. Bill Beach
Regional Administrator

Docket No. 50-10
Docket No. 50-237
Docket No. 50-249

Enclosure: SALP 14 Report
Nos. 50-237;249/96001

cc w/encl:

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