

EA 96-320

November 20, 1996

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

SUBJECT: NRC SPECIAL INSPECTION REPORT 50-309/96-11

Dear Mr. Frizzle:

This letter refers to the special inspection conducted from August 11 through September 13, 1996, at the Maine Yankee facility. The purpose of this inspection was to review, observe and verify the actions taken by your staff to ensure that your engineered safety features (ESF) systems will function as designed and in accordance with your license and technical specifications. Those actions involved logic testing of safety related systems, and were taken in response to a NRC Independent Safety Assessment Team finding, regarding inadequate safety system logic testing and the subsequent identification of a missing wire in a high pressure safety injection pump control circuit.

The inspection consisted of selected examinations of design documentation, procedures and representative records, personnel interviews, observations of test activities, and review of the actions taken by your staff to address these issues. The findings were discussed with Messrs G. Leitch, D. Whittier, J. Frothingham and others of your staff at an exit meeting on September 17, 1996.

Based on the results of this inspection, four apparent violations were identified and are being considered for escalated enforcement action in accordance with the "General Statement of Policy and Procedure for NRC Enforcement Actions" (Enforcement Policy) (60 FR 34381; June 30, 1995). The apparent violations are several. First, the "A" High Pressure Safety Injection (HPSI) pump was inoperable for a number of years dating back to the early 1990'S with respect to the ability to automatically start on a safety injection signal. This constitutes an apparent violation of Technical Specification 3.9-2 No. 1 which requires two HPSI pumps be operable during operation. Second, there were nine instances in which surveillance tests required by Technical Specification 4.1, did not demonstrate the functionality of safety related systems. These inadequacies, together, constitute an apparent violation of Technical Specification 4.1, Instrumentation and Controls, which requires the periodic calibration, testing and checking of instrument channels, reactor protection system and engineered safeguard system logic channels. Third, there were three instances in which the surveillance test required by the Technical Specification 4.5, did not demonstrate the functionality of the emergency power actuation system. This constitutes an apparent violation of Technical Specification 4.5, Emergency Power System Periodic

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Testing, which requires the periodic testing of the station electrical power system. Fourth, there was an instance in which the surveillance test required by Technical Specification 4.6, did not demonstrate the functionality of the Feedwater Trip System. This constitutes an apparent violation of Technical Specification 4.6, Periodic Testing, which requires the periodic testing of the feedwater trip system.

Accordingly, no Notice of Violation is presently being issued for these inspection findings. In addition, be advised that the number and the characterization of apparent violations described in the enclosed inspection report may change as a result of further NRC review. A predecisional enforcement conference to discuss the apparent violations will be scheduled at a later date. The decision to hold a predecisional enforcement conference does not mean that the NRC has determined that a violation has occurred or that enforcement action will be taken. The conference will be held to obtain information to enable the NRC to make an enforcement decision, such as a common understanding of the facts, root causes, missed opportunities to identify the apparent violations sooner, corrective actions, significance of the issues, and the need for lasting and effective corrective action.

While we noted that your Quality Assurance Program Department personnel provided good independent review and oversight of your recent test activities, we are concerned about the inoperability of the "A" HPSI pump over a number of years and this problem was not identified due to inadequate surveillance testing. We are also concerned that your technical, quality, and safety oversight review programs did not previously identify the inadequacies with your surveillance test procedures. In light of the number of examples of surveillance tests not adequately covering TS surveillance requirements, we question the adequacy of your surveillance testing program, in general. Accordingly, at the enforcement conference, you should be prepared to address these concerns or questions including any improvements taken and planned. In addition, this conference is an opportunity for you to point out any errors in our inspection report and for you to provide any information concerning your perspectives on: (1) the severity of the apparent violations, (2) the application of the factors that the NRC considers when it determines the amount of a civil penalty that may be assessed in accordance with Section VI.B.2 of the Enforcement Policy, and (3) any other application of the Enforcement Policy to this case, including the exercise of discretion in accordance with Section VII.

These apparent violations are being considered with those identified in the area of environmental qualification for equipment (NRC Inspection Report No. 50-309/96-10) which was forwarded to you in a letter dated September 26, 1996. You will be advised by separate correspondence of the results of our deliberations on these matters which will include the date of the enforcement conference that will collectively address these violations. No response regarding these apparent violations is required at this time.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Richard W. Cooper II, Director  
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No. 50-309

Enclosure: NRC Inspection Report No. 50-309/96-11

cc w/encl:

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Mr. Charles D. Frizzle

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