

April 10, 1996

Note To: Chairman Jackson
From: Brian Bonser
Coordinated With: Kathryn/Annette
Subject: Director's Decision (DD-96-03)

This Director's Decision concerns actions requested by several Petitioners with regard to the use of Thermo-Lag by reactor licensees. The Petitioners requested the immediate shutdown of all reactors using Thermo-Lag and the suspension of Oyster Creek, Peach Bottom Units 1 & 2, and Comanche Peak Unit 1 operating licenses.

The Petitioners had several areas of concern:

- ♦ The enforcement of the regulations by the NRC.
- ♦ The ability of fire watches to compensate for a degraded fire barrier.
- ♦ The combustibility of Thermo-Lag.
- ♦ Faulty ampacity ratings that could result in the use of inappropriate cables.
- ♦ Oyster Creek's failure to report test results on combustibility to the NRC.
- ♦ Improper installation of Thermo-Lag barriers at Comanche Peak Unit 1.

The Director's Decision found no basis for taking the requested actions. To the contrary, the issues raised by the Petitioners are being addressed. The Director's Decision was based on:

- ♦ The staff is addressing deficiencies in fire barriers constructed with Thermo-Lag material as part of a Commission-approved action plan and has issued several bulletins and a generic letter to the nuclear industry to provide information and guidance.
- ♦ Fire barrier systems constructed with Thermo-Lag have been identified and declared inoperable.
- ♦ Compensatory measures (i.e. fire watches) approved by the NRC have been implemented until permanent corrective actions are taken.

These actions in combination with other fire protection features in place provide an adequate level of fire protection until licensees implement permanent corrective actions.

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