

December 4, 1996

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-IV-96-063

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by Region IV staff in Arlington, Texas on this date.

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Licensee Emergency Classification</u>
Entergy Operations, Inc.	Notification of Unusual Event
Arkansas Nuclear 1	Alert
Russelville, Arkansas	Site Area Emergency
Dockets: 50-313	General Emergency
	X Not Applicable

Subject: RESUMPTION OF DRY CASK LOADING ACTIVITIES

Since June 3, 1996, the licensee has been restricted from loading spent fuel into Sierra Nuclear VSC-24 casks per the terms of a Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL). The CAL was imposed after it was learned from activities at the Point Beach Nuclear Power Station that the potential for the generation of hydrogen gas existed during cask loading and sealing procedures. On July 5, 1996, the NRC issued NRC Bulletin 96-04, which incorporated the issues identified in the CAL concerning the potential for generation of flammable or explosive gases and the need to ensure controls were in place to minimize potentially hazardous conditions. The licensee responded to both the CAL and the Bulletin and the NRC has completed the technical review of these responses and has found them satisfactory. On December 3, 1996, the restriction placed upon ANO concerning loading of a VSC-24 cask and placing a cask in the spent fuel pool was removed.

The licensee resumed dry cask loading operations on December 3, 1996, and the NRC is providing round-the-clock coverage of the activities. Loading, sealing, and storage of the first cask is anticipated to be completed by December 9, 1996.

The State of Arkansas was notified on December 3, 1996.

Region IV has informed EDO, NRR, and PA.

The information herein has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of December 4, 1996, at 10:45 a.m.

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