

February 29, 1984

WJE

The Honorable Richard L. Ottinger, Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy Conservation and Power
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed for your information is an announcement that the staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has cited GPU Nuclear Corporation for 12 alleged violations of technical specifications while performing work at its Three Mile Island Nuclear Station, Unit 1.

It is planned to mail this information to the news media today, February 29, 1984.

Sincerely,

Carlton Kammerer, Director
Office of Congressional Affairs

Enclosure:
As stated

cc: Rep. Carlos Moorhead

IDENTICAL LETTER SENT TO:
Sen. Simpson/cc: Sen. Hart
Rep. Udall/cc: Rep. Lujan
Rep. Markey/cc: Rep. Marlenee
Sen. Heinz
Sen. Specter
Rep. Gekas
Rep. Goodling
Rep. Walker

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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20555

No. 84-26
Tel. 301/492-7715

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-
(Wednesday, February 29, 1984)

NRC STAFF CITES GPU NUCLEAR FOR 12 ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AT THREE MILE ISLAND UNIT 1; PROPOSES \$40,000 FINE

The staff of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has cited GPU Nuclear Corporation of Parsippany, New Jersey, for 12 alleged violations of technical specifications while performing work at its Three Mile Island Nuclear Station, Unit 1 near Middletown, Pennsylvania. The NRC staff proposes to fine GPU Nuclear \$40,000 for nine of these alleged violations.

The alleged violations were identified during NRC inspections of TMI-1 conducted between August 24 and October 3, 1983.

There was no threat to the public health and safety as a result of any of these alleged violations. TMI-1 has not been in operation since 1979 when an accident damaged the Three Mile Island Nuclear Station, Unit 2, while Unit 1 was completing a refueling and maintenance outage. Unit 1 was not permitted to restart.

The alleged violations for which the NRC proposes the fine include:

- a manually operated containment isolation valve being left open between August 27 and September 20, 1983.

- another manually operated containment isolation valve being left open and the line uncapped between August 27 and September 16, 1983.

- failure to keep closed, between August 20 and 29, the liquid sample line from the makeup tank.

- failure to close, after taking a gas sample on August 27, a gas sample return valve from the makeup tank.

- failure to follow correct procedures when taking a sample from the reactor coolant system on September 30, 1983.

- failure by maintenance workers to first get permission from the authorized operating staff before taking the condenser off-gas system radiation effluent monitor out of service on August 23, 1983.

--failure on September 22, 1983, to classify an unidentified primary system leak rate which was above permissible limits as an "unusual event," as required by plant emergency procedures.

--failure to follow correct administrative steps in changing a procedure to conduct a special leak rate test of the reactor coolant system on August 29, 1983.

--failure to complete a required report on, and failure to notify the NRC of, an unplanned release of radioactive gas on August 29, 1983.

There were three other alleged violations for which no fine is proposed. They occurred on June 20, 1983, and involved:

--failure to inform workers entering a high radiation area of their permissible stay-time and maximum exposure limits, and failing to instruct them to leave the area in time to avoid exceeding those limits. The workers were not exposed beyond NRC limits.

--failure to adequately prepare for work in a radiation area and failure to end work in the area when radiation levels increased beyond the limit specified in the radiation work permit issued by plant authorities to control exposures on that job.

--failure by two persons working in a radiation area to monitor their exposure rates. The workers did not receive exposures above regulatory limits.

The NRC staff did not propose a fine for these three alleged violations because GPU Nuclear Corporation identified and reported the problems to the NRC and took immediate and extensive corrective action.

In a letter informing GPU Nuclear Corporation of this proposed enforcement action, Dr. Thomas E. Murley, NRC Region I Administrator, said, "We have been assured that you have in place an organization second to none in this country in terms of its ability to deal with the operations of TMI-1. The violations described in the attached Notice indicate that you have not yet achieved this goal."

GPU Nuclear Corporation has 30 days to either pay the fine or to request in writing that part or all of it be withdrawn. The company also has 30 days to write to the NRC staff and describe what was done or will be done to assure that these alleged violations do not recur.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed of this proposed enforcement action.