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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION II
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Framatome Cogema Fuels
ATTN: Mr. J. E. Matheson
Vice President, Operations
Lynchburg Manufacturing Facility
P. O. Box 11646
Lynchburg, VA 24506-1646

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 70-1201/2000-04

Dear Mr. Matheson:

This refers to the inspection conducted on July 31 and August 1, 2000, at the Lynchburg Manufacturing Facility. The purpose of the inspection was to determine whether activities authorized by the license were conducted safely and in accordance with NRC requirements. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with the member of your staff identified in the report.

Areas examined during the inspection are identified in the report. Within these areas, the inspection consisted of selective examinations of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, and observation of activities in progress.

Within the scope of the inspection, violations or deviations were not identified.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Edward J. McAlpine, Chief
Fuel Facilities Branch
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

Docket No. 70-1201
License No. SNM-1168

Enclosure: (See Page 2)

Enclosure: NRC Inspection Report

cc w/encl:
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U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION II

Docket No.: 70-1201

License No.: SNM-1168

Report No.: 70-1201/2000-04

Licensee: Framatome Cogema Fuels, Inc.

Facility: Lynchburg Manufacturing Facility

Location: Lynchburg, VA

Dates: July 31 - August 1, 2000

Inspectors: David A. Ayres, Sr. Fuel Facility Inspector

Approved by: E. J. McAlpine, Chief
Fuel Facilities Branch
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

Enclosure

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Framatome Cogema Fuels NRC Inspection Report 70-1201/2000-04

This routine, unannounced inspection focused on the observation and evaluation of the licensee's nuclear material process operations, management controls and training. The report covers a two day inspection effort by one regional fuel facility inspector. The inspection identified the following aspects of the facility as outlined below:

Plant Operations

The recent modifications to the rod loading and fuel assembly fabrication processes were adequate to maintain the system's margin for nuclear safety. Widening of the main route of egress from the pellet loading room was needed. Change control documentation was being adequately reviewed by safety management.

Management Organization & Controls

The Safety Review Board adequately reviewed facility information in order to address actual or potential safety issues.

Training

The licensee's general nuclear criticality training adequately addressed pertinent topics and conveyed the importance of criticality safety.

Attachment:

List of Persons Contacted

Inspection Procedures Used

List of Items Opened, Closed, Discussed

List of Acronyms Used

REPORT DETAILS

1. **Summary of Plant Status**

Fuel assembly manufacturing processes were in operation and routine Service Equipment Refurbishment Facility operations were ongoing at Framatome during the inspection. There were no unusual plant operational occurrences during the onsite inspection.

2. **Plant Operations (IP 88020)(O3)**

a. **Facility Modifications and Configuration Controls (O3.02)**

(1) **Inspection Scope**

Recent modifications to the rod loading and fuel assembly fabrication processes were reviewed to verify they received proper review by safety management and that no reduction in safety margins occurred due to the changes.

(2) **Observations and Findings**

The inspector observed the newly installed motorized conveyer system for delivering boxes of fuel pellets to the rod loading room. The inspector was informed that this system was installed due to industrial safety concerns and the change from the non-motorized system had little impact on nuclear safety. The inspector reviewed the change control documentation for the new system and found that the system change had received adequate review from safety management. The inspector also found that adequate measures were included in the design to prevent stacking and/or spillage of pellet boxes.

The inspector observed the rearrangement of the rod handling equipment that included relocation and upgrade of the rod washing system and relocation of the rod examination station. The inspector observed that the new arrangement reduced the mechanical handling of the filled rods and reduced the distance the rods traveled to be washed and inspected. However, the inspector also noted that the width of the normal egress route from the rod loading room had been reduced to below the Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards due to the new equipment arrangement and the location of two locker cabinets. The licensee's safety management indicated that the locker cabinets would be relocated to relieve this constriction. The inspector reviewed the change control documentation and again found that the system change had received adequate review from safety management.

(3) **Conclusion**

The recent modifications to the rod loading and fuel assembly fabrication processes were adequate to maintain the system's margin for nuclear safety. Widening of the main route of egress from the pellet loading room was needed. Change control documentation was being adequately reviewed by safety management.

3. **Management Organization & Controls (IP 88005)(O5)**

a. Safety Committees (O5.04)

(1) Inspection Scope

The functioning of the Safety Review Board was reviewed to verify that safety issues were being given proper consideration.

(2) Observations and Findings

The inspector reviewed the minutes from the last two quarterly Safety Review Board meetings. The inspector found that each meeting consisted of a review of operational change requests, NRC inspection findings, on-site worker radiation doses, injury reports, safety and licensing deficiency reports, and environmental radiation measurements. The inspector also found that both nuclear and industrial safety functions were adequately represented in each meeting. The inspector found that each item reviewed was given appropriate consideration and management attention.

(3) Conclusion

The Safety Review Board adequately reviewed facility information in order to address actual or potential safety issues.

4. Training (IP 88010)(F2)

a. General Nuclear Criticality Training (F2.02)

(1) Inspection Scope

General nuclear criticality training was reviewed to verify that it adequately conveyed the importance of criticality safety.

(2) Observations and Findings

The inspector viewed the licensee's new computer-enhanced criticality safety training given to all workers on site. The inspector observed that the training included a synopsis of past industry criticality accidents. The inspector observed that the training discussed the various topics associated with the potential causes of a criticality, and criticality safety control parameters (mass, geometry, moderation, etc.). The inspector found that the training included enough audio-visual stimulation to help keep trainees attentive.

(3) Conclusions

The licensee's general nuclear criticality training adequately addressed pertinent topics and conveyed the importance of criticality safety.

5. Exit Interview

The inspector exited with the licensee's manager of licensing on August 1, 2000. The inspector discussed the routine program areas inspected, and the findings. No dissenting comments were expressed by the licensee. The licensee supplied proprietary materials during the inspection, although proprietary information is not contained in this report.

ATTACHMENT

PARTIAL LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED

Licensee

T. Allsep, Manager, Radiation Protection
G. Lindsey, Health Physicist
J. Matheson, Plant Manager
T. Wilkerson, Manager, Quality, Health/Safety and Licensing
R. Freeman, Manager, Licensing and Nuclear Material and Accountability

INSPECTION PROCEDURES USED

IP 88005 Management Organization and Controls
IP 88010 Operator Training/Retraining
IP 88020 Regional Nuclear Criticality Safety Inspection Program

LIST OF ITEMS OPENED, CLOSED, AND DISCUSSED

Opened

None

Closed

None

Discussed

None

ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

IP Inspection Procedure
NRC Nuclear Regulatory Commission