



NRC NEWS

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NRC PROHIBITS FORMER BROWNS FERRY EMPLOYEE FROM LICENSED ACTIVITIES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued an order prohibiting Hiram J. Bass, the former Measuring and Test Equipment Program Administrator at the Tennessee Valley Authority's Browns Ferry nuclear plant, from engaging in NRC-licensed activities for three years. In addition, for three years after the prohibition, Bass must notify the agency in writing if he becomes involved in licensed activities.

During 1999 and earlier this year, NRC investigations and inspections found that Bass had deliberately failed to issue and/or disposition a number of nonconformance evaluations for instruments used at the Browns Ferry plant. The measuring and testing instruments are calibrated at a TVA central facility and when an instrument is identified as out of tolerance, that information is forwarded to the plant. The program administrator is responsible for evaluating and distributing that information so plant employees can review the potential effects on plant components where the instruments may have been used. On numerous occasions, Bass, as program administrator, did not properly handle that information. An internal assessment at Browns Ferry found the discrepancies and, when questioned by both TVA and the NRC, Bass failed to explain why the information had not been issued and/or dispositioned. Bass resigned from TVA in June 1999.

Although the NRC is citing TVA for a violation related to this problem, the agency is not fining TVA for the violation because safety-related plant components were not affected.

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