

January 29, 2001

Mr. J. Sorenson  
Site General Manager  
Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant  
Nuclear Management Company, LLC  
1717 Wakonade Drive East  
Welch, MN 55089

SUBJECT: PRAIRIE ISLAND - RESOLUTION OF UNRESOLVED SECURITY ISSUE

Dear Mr. Sorenson:

Section 3PH2.b of Inspection Report No. 50-8282/306/ 2000003, dated March 9, 2000, identified an unresolved item pertaining to access to vital areas. 10 CFR 73.55(d)(7) and Section 8.1 of the Prairie Island security plan requires the access authorization program to limit unescorted access to vital areas to non-emergency work related needs. During the inspection, personnel's access authorization to vital areas was compared to actual entry into the vital areas. In some cases, personnel had not entered an authorized vital area(s) within the six month review period. The unresolved item was whether the frequency of access was a factor that needs to be considered in granting continued unescorted access to vital areas.

The NRC has concluded that the frequency of access to a vital area should be closely reviewed by supervisors when reviewing the justification for granting continued access. However, the lack of frequent access to a vital area is not a singular cause to deny access. Such occasions of infrequent access are expected to be exceptions (e.g., fire brigade members, EMTs, first responders, etc.) since most plants have procedural guidance that allow timely changes to access levels for outages and other known work projects. Individual supervisors (rather than the security organization) bear the primary regulatory responsibility for limiting vital area access authorization to personnel with legitimate non-emergency work related needs. We have concluded that your activities complied with regulatory requirements.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter 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).

Sincerely,

**/RA/**

James R. Creed  
Safeguards Program Manager  
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket Nos. 50-282; 50-306  
License Nos. DPR-42; DPR-60

cc: Plant Manager, Prairie Island  
M. Wadley, Chief Nuclear Officer  
G. Eckholt, Site Licensing Manager  
S. Northard, Nuclear Asset Manager  
J. Malcolm, Commissioner, Minnesota  
Department of Health  
State Liaison Officer, State of Wisconsin  
Tribal Council, Prairie Island Dakota Community  
J. Silberg, Esquire  
Shawn, Pittman, Potts, and Trowbridge  
P. Tester, Assistant Attorney General  
Minnesota Office of Attorney General  
S. Bloom, Administrator  
Goodhue County Courthouse  
Commissioner, Minnesota Department  
Of Commerce

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