

EXHIBIT 33

Case No. 2-1998-023
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EXHIBIT 33
EX 7C

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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In the Matter of: :
INTERVIEW OF :
RALPH THOMAS MCCOLLUM : OI Case 2-1998-023
(CLOSED) :

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Friday, September 10, 1999

The above-entitled matter came on for interview via telephone, pursuant to notice.

BEFORE:

GARY H. CLAXTON, Special Agent

EXHIBIT 33
PAGE 1 OF 17 PAGE(S)

2-1998-023

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C O N T E N T S

WITNESS

EXAMINATION

RALPH THOMAS MCCOLLUM

BY MR. CLAXTON

5

E X H I B I T S

NUMBER

IDENTIFIED

[NONE>]

P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. CLAXTON: Let's go on the record. For the
3 record, today's date is September 10th, 1999. This is a
4 telephone interview of Ralph Thomas McCollum.

5 And, Mr. McCollum, I believe you go by the name
6 Tom?

7 MR. McCOLLUM: That's true.

8 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Mr. McCollum, are you
9 presently at your address?

10 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

11 MR. CLAXTON: And what is that address, please?

12 MR. McCOLLUM: [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]
14 MR. CLAXTON: And your home telephone number is
15 [REDACTED]

16 MR. McCOLLUM: Right.

17 MR. CLAXTON: All right. My name is Gary Claxton,
18 I am a Special Agent with the Office of Investigations of
19 the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, located in Region II,
20 Atlanta, Georgia, and I am on the telephone with Mr.
21 McCollum, speaking from my office at 61 Forsyth Street,
22 S.W., in Atlanta, Georgia.

23 Mr. McCollum, are you satisfied with my official
24 identity with the NRC?

25 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

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1 MR. CLAXTON: Have we talked previously about the
2 purpose of the interview?

3 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

4 MR. CLAXTON: And I believe that conversation took
5 place yesterday, which was Thursday, September 9th.

6 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

7 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Are you -- did we
8 discuss -- well, I believe I just asked you whether we
9 discussed the purpose of the interview and that being a
10 corrective action report which you were involved with at TVA
11 in 1995.

12 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

13 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Mr. McCollum, do you
14 have anyone witnessing this conversation?

15 MR. McCOLLUM: No.

16 MR. CLAXTON: And for your information, I also do
17 not have anyone with me. Are you aware that I am recording
18 this by audio tape?

19 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

20 MR. CLAXTON: And I have your permission to do
21 that?

22 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

23 Whereupon,

24 RALPH THOMAS MCCOLLUM,
25 the interviewee, was called for examination and, was

1 examined and testified as follows:

2 DIRECT EXAMINATION

3 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Mr. McCollum, I have
4 already given your full name and you have provided your
5 address. Are you presently employed?

6 MR. MCCOLLUM: No.

7 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Were you previously
8 employed by TVA?

9 MR. MCCOLLUM: Yes.

10 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. What were the -- well, if you
11 would, just give me a brief resume of your employment,
12 starting with your most recent employment and working
13 backwards.

14 MR. MCCOLLUM: First, most of this year I worked
15 for -- I worked through a company called SAIC, worked at
16 Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant as a contractor. Prior to
17 that, I have worked at various locations. And if you want
18 to, I can go get into specifics, but I have worked various
19 locations as a contractor. I worked for TVA up until 1988.
20 When they closed down Bellefonte Nuclear Plant, I was laid
21 off and retired at that time. I have stayed in a state of
22 retirement since then. I have worked for NASA, I have
23 worked for --

24 MR. CLAXTON: I'm sorry. Was that NASA, the
25 National --

1 MR. McCOLLUM: National Aeronautics and Space
2 Administration.

3 MR. CLAXTON: Space. Right. Thank you.

4 MR. McCOLLUM: In Huntsville, Alabama.

5 MR. CLAXTON: All right.

6 MR. McCOLLUM: And right now I am retired again.
7 I have been at home for about four or five months, not
8 employed and not looking.

9 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Were you employed by TVA
10 during the 1995 timeframe?

11 MR. McCOLLUM: I was working for TVA as a
12 contractor, but I was not a direct TVA employee.

13 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Do you recall the name of the
14 contract entity that you were working with?

15 MR. McCOLLUM: I was hired in through Stone &
16 Webster.

17 MR. CLAXTON: All right. What was your occupation
18 at that time?

19 MR. McCOLLUM: I was working as -- we were closing
20 the PERs and we were -- and my job was to review them for
21 closure.

22 MR. CLAXTON: All right. In your employment
23 history, has most or some of that employment involved
24 nuclear work?

25 MR. McCOLLUM: Most of it has.

1 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Do you have any formal
2 education?

3 MR. McCOLLUM: A degree in mechanical engineering
4 from the University of Alabama at Huntsville.

5 MR. CLAXTON: All right. And are you a
6 professional engineer?

7 MR. McCOLLUM: No.

8 MR. CLAXTON: All right. In dealing with these
9 PERS at TVA, were you employed at the Watts Bar plant?

10 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

11 MR. CLAXTON: Now, I provided a facsimile copy on
12 September 9th to you of some pages of a corrective action
13 report. And just for brevity, if it is all right with you,
14 we will refer to those, or to that as a CAR.

15 MR. McCOLLUM: Okay.

16 MR. CLAXTON: I provided some copies of a
17 particular CAR to you. Do you recall dealing with that CAR
18 in particular?

19 MR. McCOLLUM: Vaguely. Vaguely. There were so
20 many of them we dealt with, that that particular one just
21 doesn't really stand out in my mind, but I do vaguely
22 remember it.

23 MR. CLAXTON: All right. And do you have the
24 copies of that, or do you have copies of those pages that I
25 have provided to you with you?

1 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

2 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Each page, at some point,
3 were individually numbered at the bottom, it looks like they
4 were hand numbered. One of the pages I provided to you is
5 numbered page number 22 at the bottom.

6 MR. McCOLLUM: Uh-huh.

7 MR. CLAXTON: And it looks like -- is that your
8 signature?

9 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

10 MR. CLAXTON: Above your typed name, the date.

11 MR. McCOLLUM: Uh-huh.

12 MR. CLAXTON: August 10th, [inaudible].

13 MR. McCOLLUM: Yeah.

14 MR. CLAXTON: Do you recall what the purpose would
15 have been for you signing this particular page, and can you
16 tell me a little bit about what that page, the purpose of
17 that adverse condition report continuation page?

18 MR. McCOLLUM: Typically, the PERs were, once
19 identified as a PER, the items were then -- corrective
20 actions were then assigned. Of course, it went through all
21 the review process and the corrective actions were agreed
22 with.

23 When they got ready to close the PER, our job was
24 to verify that all the corrective actions had been
25 implemented, and then close the package, submit it for

1 closure. And it was further reviewed after I signed it for
2 verification. But the bottom line is we were to review all
3 the corrective actions and make sure they had been
4 implemented.

5 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Can you tell who you
6 reported to as far as someone within the TVA organization?

7 MR. McCOLLUM: Are you talking about a TVA
8 employee?

9 MR. CLAXTON: Right. Or did you report --

10 MR. McCOLLUM: The TVA employee that I reported to
11 was a fellow named Rick Norton.

12 MR. CLAXTON: N-o-r-t-o-n?

13 MR. McCOLLUM: Right.

14 MR. CLAXTON: Do you recall who he -- or what
15 organization, or what area?

16 MR. McCOLLUM: QA.

17 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. QA in TVA.

18 MR. McCOLLUM: Uh-huh.

19 MR. CLAXTON: Did you work with or for Jim Adair
20 at any time?

21 MR. McCOLLUM: I worked with him.

22 MR. CLAXTON: So you know --

23 MR. McCOLLUM: You are talking about James Adair?

24 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Yeah. You know who he is.

25 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

1 MR. CLAXTON: Nuclear Engineering.

2 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

3 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Do you recall discussing
4 this particular CAR with Mr. Adair?

5 MR. McCOLLUM: No, I don't specifically recall
6 that.

7 MR. CLAXTON: Now, since you were a contractor, at
8 what point would this -- at what point would a CAR come to
9 you? In reviewing the package, I noticed that there are
10 several signature blocks apparently for closure, many of
11 which are TVA employees, and you told me you were a contract
12 employee.

13 MR. McCOLLUM: Correct.

14 MR. CLAXTON: Can you tell me the relationship or
15 why you would sign it and then certain TVA employees would
16 sign, just to help me understand the process?

17 MR. McCOLLUM: If I remember correctly, what would
18 happen is once the TVA personnel decided or reviewed it,
19 however you want to say it, that the corrective actions were
20 there and that they had been implemented, then they were
21 sent to QA organization for a final oversight, and a final
22 review, and that is where we can in.

23 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Typically, how
24 meticulously or how closely would you come behind the TVA
25 people to review their closure approval? In other words, if

1 there were documents involved, would you go to great pains
2 to make sure that every I was dotted and every T was
3 crossed?

4 MR. McCOLLUM: As a rule, yes, we tried to do
5 that.

6 MR. CLAXTON: So, in regards to this CAR, as we
7 discussed yesterday, there were four steps, and I don't --
8 since you have your copy there, I don't think it is
9 necessary for the record to discuss what each step was. But
10 then there were four corrective action verifications.

11 MR. McCOLLUM: Right.

12 MR. CLAXTON: And then you signed at the bottom.

13 MR. McCOLLUM: Right.

14 MR. CLAXTON: That the PER was acceptable. Step
15 number 3 said that NE -- does that refer to Nuclear
16 Engineering?

17 MR. McCOLLUM: Nuclear Engineering.

18 MR. CLAXTON: Within the TVA, I suppose, would
19 request Westinghouse to evaluate the data collected from
20 corrective action steps 1 and 2.

21 MR. McCOLLUM: Correct.

22 MR. CLAXTON: And corrective action step 1 was to
23 perform a metallurgical test and evaluation of failed ice
24 basket screws. Is that to say that Nuclear Engineering --
25 am I correct in understanding that Nuclear Engineering was

1 to attain a metallurgical test and provide that to
2 Westinghouse for their evaluation?

3 MR. McCOLLUM: As I understand it, that is what
4 should have happened, yes.

5 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. And I will just bluntly ask
6 you the question, do you know whether or not that happened?

7 MR. McCOLLUM: No, I don't.

8 MR. CLAXTON: I know you --

9 MR. McCOLLUM: What -- if I remember correctly,
10 when I read the -- in reading the corrective action
11 verification, we had a letter from Westinghouse that said
12 that they had performed a test, but I don't recall what the
13 letter said specifically. In the previous discussions, it
14 had been noted that apparently Westinghouse didn't really
15 address the metallurgical issues.

16 MR. CLAXTON: Do you recall when you learned that?

17 MR. McCOLLUM: Yesterday.

18 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Did that ever become an issue
19 that you recall?

20 MR. McCOLLUM: Not that I recall, no.

21 MR. CLAXTON: When you were actually in the
22 process of closing this?

23 MR. McCOLLUM: No. I don't recall anything about
24 it, no.

25 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. And to ask it another way,

1 basically the same question, did you ever question Mr. Adair
2 or any other TVA employee as to how corrective action step
3 number 3 was completed or whether it was in fact completed?

4 MR. McCOLLUM: No, I don't recall whether I did or
5 not.

6 MR. CLAXTON: Do you recall whether Mr. Adair or
7 anyone from TVA came to you and justified the report that
8 Westinghouse had provided regarding the CAR?

9 MR. McCOLLUM: No, I don't recall that.

10 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Just for the record, you were
11 referring to the Westinghouse letter, and I think to
12 specifically identify that, are you referring to the
13 Westinghouse evaluation letter WAT-D-10048 that is
14 referenced in step number 3?

15 MR. McCOLLUM: Yes.

16 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. And if I understand you
17 correctly, you accepted that document as satisfying the
18 Westinghouse evaluation, which turned out to be a structural
19 evaluation, as opposed to a metallurgical evaluation?

20 MR. McCOLLUM: True.

21 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Do you recall ever actually
22 seeing that Westinghouse report?

23 MR. McCOLLUM: I don't recall seeing it.
24 Typically, we would go look for those things and review
25 them. But I don't recall specifically if I did or not.

1 MR. CLAXTON: And there again, I am asking,
2 typically, normally, in the normal course of business, when
3 you went to look at that Westinghouse report, would you just
4 see that there was a Westinghouse report and maybe look at
5 the conclusions and go -- or would you, as an engineer,
6 would you pick it apart and see why they said what they
7 said?

8 MR. McCOLLUM: Normally, we would try to review
9 the full context of the response to determine if it answered
10 the concerns.

11 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Have you talked to Mr.
12 Adair within the recent past concerning this CAR?

13 MR. McCOLLUM: No.

14 MR. CLAXTON: Have you talked to anyone at TVA
15 other than the TVA attorney regarding this CAR?

16 MR. McCOLLUM: Nobody at TVA, no.

17 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Have you talked to anyone
18 else other than myself?

19 MR. McCOLLUM: I talked to Larry Katcham
20 yesterday.

21 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. What was Mr. Katcham's
22 opinion on how this may have happened? Did he have any
23 opinion?

24 MR. McCOLLUM: He didn't have an opinion on how it
25 happened. We just -- I just wanted to make sure that I

1 clearly understood what was going on, but he didn't have an
2 opinion one way or the other.

3 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Did he give you any
4 indication as to why or how step number 3 in the corrective
5 action was satisfied with the Westinghouse evaluation
6 report?

7 MR. McCOLLUM: No.

8 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Do you have any questions?
9 According to what we have talked about, has this raised any
10 issues or has it --

11 MR. McCOLLUM: Caused me any concern?

12 MR. CLAXTON: Well, has it brought any information
13 to mind that you think might resolve the issue?

14 MR. McCOLLUM: No.

15 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. You just mentioned has it --
16 whether or not it has brought any concerns. Do you have any
17 concerns that you would like to voice?

18 MR. McCOLLUM: No.

19 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. You realize that you can
20 provide information to the NRC at any time in a confidential
21 manner?

22 MR. McCOLLUM: Sure.

23 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. And I would like to ask you
24 whether this information has been provided free and
25 voluntarily?

1 MR. McCOLLUM: Sure, it has.

2 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. Have I or has any other
3 employee of the NRC threatened you in any way or offered any
4 promises in return for this information you have provided?

5 MR. McCOLLUM: No.

6 MR. CLAXTON: All right. Do you have any
7 questions of me or anything regarding what we have talked
8 about?

9 MR. McCOLLUM: No, I don't.

10 MR. CLAXTON: Okay. With that, we will conclude
11 the recorded portion of this interview.

12 MR. McCOLLUM: Okay.

13 [Whereupon, the interview was concluded.]

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CERTIFICATE

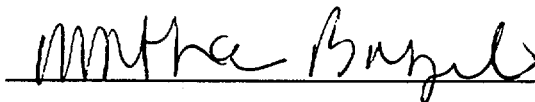
This is to certify that the attached proceedings before the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission in the matter of:

Name of Proceeding: INTERVIEW OF
RALPH THOMAS MCCOLLUM
(CLOSED)

Docket Number: 2-1998-023

Place of Proceeding: Scottsboro, AL

were held as herein appears, and that this is the original transcript thereof for the file of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission transcribed by me from recorded tapes provided by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and that the transcript is a true and accurate record of the foregoing proceedings to the best of my belief and ability.



Martha Brazil

Transcriber

Ann Riley & Associates, Ltd.