

July 25, 2001

Mr. David A. Lochbaum
Nuclear Safety Engineer
Union of Concerned Scientists
1707 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-3919

SUBJECT: HUMAN PERFORMANCE TEAM AT SALEM

Dear Mr. Lochbaum:

In your July 6, 2001, letter you requested that the NRC resident inspection staff at Hope Creek and Salem monitor the progress of the Human Performance Team, which was established by PSEG Nuclear to address human performance errors and was discussed in LER 272/01-004-00 for Salem.

We agree with your position that human performance is a vital factor in the safe operation of a nuclear facility and that reducing the frequency of human errors is important. Our inspection program recognizes this importance in that various inspection procedures cover personnel performance during non-routine events and review the outcomes of personnel actions regarding operability evaluations, plant modifications, and maintenance program effectiveness. The program specifically reviews each facility's effectiveness in identifying and resolving problems.

The NRC's inspection program focuses on the performance-based measures of human performance and provides effective means to evaluate the outcomes of events and problems which may involve human performance errors. As such, the resident inspection staff will monitor the effects that the team has on the frequency of errors by using the baseline inspection program vice direct observation of the team's progress. I am confident that the resident inspectors will maintain an awareness of the team's progress through routine interactions with PSEG Nuclear.

As you know, our assessment process includes provisions for the staff to highlight substantive cross-cutting issues in our assessment letters to licensee management when such issues have adversely affected overall performance at their facilities. In our evaluations of human performance errors at Salem and Hope Creek, we continue to evaluate PSEG Nuclear's progress in addressing this important area, but our most recent assessment did not conclude that problems regarding human performance were sufficiently numerous or significant to constitute a substantive cross-cutting issue.

Mr. David A. Lochbaum

2

We appreciate your letter and we hope we have been responsive. If you have any additional questions or comments, please contact Glenn Meyer, the Branch Chief for Salem and Hope Creek, at 610-337-5211 or gwm@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

A. Randolph Blough, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

cc: State of New Jersey

Distribution:

- H. Miller, RA/J. Wiggins, DRA
- R. Jenkins, RI EDO Coordinator
- R. Lorson, SRI
- J. Laughlin, RI
- E. Adensam, NRR
- M. Johnson, NRR
- D. Coe, NRR
- M. Satorius, NRR
- T. Frye, NRR
- R. Correia, NRR
- R. Fretz, NRR
- R. Ennis, NRR
- R. Pascarelli, NRR
- A. Blough, DRP
- G. Meyers, DRP
- R. Barkley, DRP
- T. Haverkamp, DRP

DOCUMENT NAME: C:\Program Files\Adobe\Acrobat 4.0\PDF Output\Lochbaum reply.wpd

After declaring this document "An Official Agency Record" it **will** be released to the Public.

To receive a copy of this document, indicate in the box: "C" = Copy without attachment/enclosure "E" = Copy with attachment/enclosure "N" = No copy

OFFICE	RI:DRP		NRR:IPB		RI:DRP				
NAME	Meyer/JGS f/		Satorius/via e-mail		Blough/ARB				
DATE	07/24/01		07/24/01		07/24/01				

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY