

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
Office of the Inspector General
RECORD OF INTERVIEW

DOCKETED
USNRC

2003 MAR 11 PM 12:01

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
RULEMAKINGS AND
ADJUDICATIONS STAFF

(I)

Name: Wilson C. McArthur
Position: Manager
Office: Operation Services
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Work Tel.: (615) 751-8715
Residence: [REDACTED]
Home Tel.: [REDACTED]
SSN/DOB: [REDACTED]

McArthur was contacted at his office in the Chattanooga Office Complex (COC) and advised of the identities of the interviewing agents. He was interviewed concerning his knowledge of an allegation that William F. Jocher, former Corporate Chemistry Manager, was forced to resign from TVA for identifying safety-related issues in TVA's nuclear chemistry program. McArthur provided the following information.

McArthur provided his personal notebooks which contained handwritten notes concerning counseling sessions of Jocher. McArthur had originally furnished copies of the notes to the OIG on August 11, 1993. The interviewing agents confirmed that notes were written on February 19, 1992, February 25, 1993, May 17, 1992, and March 10, 1993. The notes dated March 10, 1993 were contained in a separate notebook in which the handwritten note pertaining to Jocher was the only entry in the notebook. McArthur explained that once it was decided to give Jocher a 6 month trial period, he (McArthur) started a new notebook in order to document Jocher's performance. However, there are no additional entries because Jocher was asked to resign soon thereafter. In addition, there were no external markings on this notebook as were evident on the other notebooks created by McArthur.

Jocher's Position as the Sequoyah Nuclear Plant (SQN) Chemistry Manager

1. McArthur stated that the idea that Jocher being sent to SQN was a demotion is "totally silly." Jocher was assigned to SQN to help them solve the problems in the chemistry program. McArthur advised that although the Corporate Chemistry Manager position is a PG10 and the SQN Chemistry Manager position is a PG9, Jocher retained the same salary when he moved to SQN. McArthur denied that the move was a disciplinary action, and even stated that it should have been seen as a "compliment." However, Jocher was very concerned that people in the industry may see the move as a demotion.

Continued

INVESTIGATION ON: August 31, 1993

AT: Chattanooga, Tennessee

BY: SAs Beth B. Thomas and Fred P. Vichich: BBT

FILE: 2D-133-42

BA000310

0880D

Template = SECY-028

SECY-02

FEDERAL CLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Docket No. 50-390 Official Ex. No. STAFF 85

In the matter of TVA

Staff ✓ IDENTIFIED ✓

Applicant _____ RECEIVED ✓

Intervenor _____ REJECTED _____

Other _____ WITHDRAWN _____

DATE 5/2/02 Witness _____

Clerk BHM

Vertical text on the right margin, possibly a date stamp or reference number, including "MAY 10 2002".

2. Jocher told McArthur that Rob Beecken, former Plant Manager, SQN, was not in favor of him (Jocher) staying on as the site Chemistry Manager because Beecken believed he (Jocher) was not timely or accurate with a response to an INPO evaluation. However, Beecken never told McArthur that he did not want Jocher to stay at SQN. McArthur advised that both Jocher and Beecken had expressed concern over Jocher trying to solve problems by sending memorandum. According to McArthur, Beecken liked to deal face-to-face without memorandums. McArthur told Jocher it was necessary for him (Jocher) to follow through on his memorandum because other people may see an item as a low priority even if Jocher believed it was important.
3. McArthur does not believe Jocher had enough time to resolve the problems at SQN. According to McArthur, there was only enough time to identify the problems and put together plans to fix them. Jocher had went to Joe Bynum, Vice President, Nuclear Operation, to request an additional 2 or 3 technical people to help him resolve the chemistry problems at SQN. However, Jocher was not given the manpower resources he requested.
4. At one point before returning to Corporate Chemistry, Jocher believed that he may need to stay at SQN longer to complete the work he had began. Pat Lydon, Operations Manager, had originally had an agreement with Jocher for this to occur; however, once Lydon was asked to leave TVA, it did not work out.
5. McArthur said there "was no doubt in his mind" that Jocher was returning to Corporate Chemistry to resume his previous position as Corporate Chemistry Manager.

Jocher's Termination

1. McArthur recalled having two or three regularly scheduled meetings with Bynum in which Bynum would ask "...how is Jocher was doing?" McArthur would say he (Jocher) was doing "o.k." Bynum was aware that the site improvement plan for Chemistry was moving very slowly. McArthur could recall several times that Bynum would say "I don't think he (Jocher) fits into the program, what do you think?" McArthur typically said "he (Jocher) is the best technical person I've got." McArthur told Bynum that from a management standpoint Jocher had some weaknesses, but he (McArthur) believed Jocher's technical expertise overruled this and "I (McArthur) would keep the guy on."
2. In March 1993, McArthur attended a meeting at SQN with Joe Bynum, Vice President, Nuclear Operations, and Dan Keuter, Vice President, Nuclear Operations Services, to discuss Jocher. Bynum said "I want to terminate the guy." At that time, Keuter said "why don't you let Wilson (McArthur) work with the guy and see if he can improve his management style." Following Bynum's approval, McArthur then told Jocher that he had 6 months to correct his performance.

McArthur's intent was to set up a written action plan to improve Jocher's performance, but there was nothing written down prior to Jocher's resignation. During their discussion, Jocher had said he was "willing to work at it (to improve his performance)."

3. About a month after the first meeting, McArthur had another meeting at SQN with Keuter and Bynum in which Bynum said "I want him (Jocher) terminated and you need to let Gary Fiser go also." Fiser was currently in a Chemistry Program Manager position at the corporate level. McArthur said there had been an intent to let Fiser take over Don Adams' position. Adams, a corporate Program Manager, was in the process of moving to SQN. However, Bynum told McArthur to send Fiser to the Employee Transition Program (ETP) and to give Jocher 30 days to resign.
4. According to McArthur, the decision to terminate Jocher was a direct order from Bynum. McArthur has no idea why Bynum changed his mind about the 6 month trial period, nor did he ask Bynum the reason.
5. McArthur recalls having a discussion with Keuter after the meeting in which Keuter said "we've been given our marching orders, lets do what we have to do."
6. According to McArthur, Jocher was terminated for having a poor management style. There was a common statement about Jocher that McArthur heard from Beecken, Keuter and others that Jocher was very good at identifying problems but could not resolve them.
7. Jocher had indicated to McArthur that if management did not want him at TVA then he would resign. However, McArthur cannot recall telling Bynum that Jocher would resign.
8. McArthur advised that Jocher had the feeling all along that he was not well accepted at TVA. One reason Jocher felt this way was because of a comment he had made during a presentation to the Board of Directors at SQN. Keuter and Bynum had told McArthur that Jocher made this comment in the presence of Kingsley. McArthur had asked Bynum if Kingsley was upset with Jocher on two separate occasions. On one occasion, Bynum stated he did not know and on the other, he said "no, he did not think it was a problem."
9. McArthur has no knowledge of Kingsley being involved in Jocher's termination. McArthur believes that Jocher thinks Kingsley is involved because Keuter, Bynum and he (McArthur) agreed to give Jocher the 6 month trial period and Kingsley would be the only one who could override their decision.
10. McArthur stated that if it had been his decision, he "would not have fired him (Jocher)" and Jocher would have continued in his position as Corporate Chemistry Manager.
11. McArthur did not show Keuter or Bynum the recommendation letter he prepared for Jocher. He is not aware if Keuter or Bynum have ever seen this letter.

Continued

BA000312

Jocher's Performance Problems

1. According to McArthur, while Jocher was the Corporate Chemistry Manager, Bynum knew that Jocher had a lot of problems dealing with John Sabados, the Chemistry Manager, Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant (BFN), and Gary Fiser, the SQN Chemistry Manager. Sabados told McArthur on a couple of occasions that he had told Bynum that Jocher was "opinionated" and "overbearing" and that he (Sabados) did not want Jocher involved in his (BFN Chemistry) program. However, McArthur confirmed that the problems involving Sabados had occurred before Jocher became the SQN Chemistry Manager.
2. McArthur believes Jocher's main problem was his rapport with the sites. Bynum had a lot of input from Site Vice Presidents and Plant Managers. As Jocher was preparing to become the SQN Chemistry Manager, Bynum told Jocher that he needed to continue to be involved in some of the main issues like Hydrogen Water Chemistry since he was only at SQN on a temporary basis. Bynum gave Jocher the liberty to be involved in some oversight areas and the sites did not like that.

Gordon Rich

1. As part of his mission statement, McArthur is responsible for finding qualified people at the sites. Since Jocher was scheduled to come back to Corporate, McArthur began to ask people if they had any recommendations. Keuter mentioned to McArthur that Gordon Rich from Trojan Nuclear Plant (TNP) might be available. McArthur made the first phone call to Rich around the beginning of the year (1993) to ask for a copy of his resume. There were rumors that TNP might be closing down, but the initial telephone call to Rich occurred prior to the closing. During this telephone conversation, McArthur told Rich they were looking for a Chemistry Manager and they wanted to set up an interview.
2. When Rich came for his interview (about a month following the initial telephone call), he (Rich) talked with McArthur, Keuter, Jocher, Sam Harvey and various people at SQN. McArthur advised that Rich did interview at Corporate, but he (McArthur) was interviewing Rich for the SQN Chemistry Manager position. When questioned as to why a Corporate Manager would be interviewing a prospective site employee, McArthur again explained that it was his responsibility to get quality individuals at the site. About this time, Jocher was asking to stay at SQN so there was some thought that Rich could take over either the SQN Chemistry Manager position or the Corporate Chemistry Manager position. Jocher wanted to stay at SQN in order to complete his programs and because he was very interested in the Site RadCon/Chemistry Manager's position.

Continued

BA000313

3. Charles Kent, RadCon/Chemistry Manager, SQN, did not want to fill the Chemistry Manager position and as a result, he was considering Rich for a lower position. Keuter was upset with Kent because Keuter did not feel that SQN should make an offer to Rich for a position which reported to the Chemistry Manager when Rich had a background of being a Chemistry Manager. McArthur knew that Keuter was "very, very unhappy" with Kent.
4. An offer for the Corporate Chemistry Manager position went out to Rich about the same time SQN was offering Rich the lower site position. McArthur believes this offer for the Corporate Chemistry Manager position went out after Jocher resigned, but he does not know for sure. He stated he was out of town when the offer to Rich went out.
5. McArthur stated that it was "a possibility" that either he or Keuter may have told Rich that if Jocher stays at SQN then he could become the Corporate Chemistry Manager. McArthur said he never told Rich that Jocher may not work out in the Corporate Chemistry Manager position.
6. McArthur stated that he did not tell Bynum that he wanted to bring Rich in as the Corporate Chemistry Manager prior to Jocher's resignation, nor did he ever hear Keuter tell Bynum that he wanted Rich to replace Jocher.
7. McArthur cannot recall a conversation in which Bynum said "You cannot bring Rich on board as the Corporate Chemistry Manager unless you deal with Fiser and/or Jocher."

Downsizing

1. McArthur can only recall a downsizing occurring approximately a year and a half ago. In addition, McArthur believes the staffing for Corporate Chemistry has remained the same for about the past year.
2. McArthur cannot recall there ever being a chemistry specialist position. The only comparative position would be a Program Manager position.
3. Although it was not even discussed, there would not have been a position open in the event that Bynum would have given the option of demoting Jocher. Regardless, McArthur does not believe Jocher would have accepted a lower position.

McArthur's Knowledge of Gary Fiser

1. Fiser never related to McArthur that he (Fiser) had heard that Jocher told a representative of the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) detailed problem areas in the SQN chemistry program.

Continued

BA000314

2. McArthur was under the impression that Fiser was going to go back to SQN following the one year period where the "switch" occurred between Fiser and Jocher; however, Beecken refused to accept Fiser back. Beecken wanted McArthur to absorb the headcount and, although initially McArthur refused, he eventually agreed to find another position for Fiser. In addition, Jocher had agreed to find a place for Fiser in the corporate chemistry staff. However, McArthur was then ordered to put Fiser into ETP.
3. At a later time when Charles Kent agreed to reinstate the SQN Chemistry Manager position, Kent tried to bring Fiser into that position. McArthur recalls telling Kent to be concerned because the plant management did not want Fiser in that position. Fiser had already interviewed with Ken Powers (phonetic), the new SQN Plant Manager. Mark Medford, Vice President, Nuclear Assurance, told Robert Fenech, Site Vice President, SQN, that he (Medford) did not think Fiser would work out as the new SQN Chemistry Manager.

Miscellaneous

1. McArthur could not specifically recall recommending Jocher for a November 1992 IIP (Individual Increase Program); however, McArthur stated that at that time he would have ranked Jocher as "high on the list" of people getting IIPs. McArthur based this opinion on Jocher's technical ability and because he believed Jocher would be an "integral part of solving SQN's problems." McArthur said he would have given Jocher an IIP even though he had management problems because "nobody's perfect" and technical ability carries a lot of weight with him (McArthur).
2. McArthur confirmed that he sits on the Nuclear Safety Review Board (NSRB), which goes to the sites and looks at safety issues. McArthur was on the RadCon/Chemistry subcommittee and would often interact with Jocher in this capacity.
3. McArthur stated that he counseled Jocher even while Jocher was at SQN and was not reporting to him. For example, McArthur counseled Jocher about violating the chain of command when Jocher threatened to go straight to Oliver Kingsley about an issue.
4. After Rich went to SQN on August 9, 1993, the SQN Chemistry Manager position was posted and Rich was chosen to fill this position.
5. McArthur consented to take a polygraph if deemed necessary during this investigation.

BBT

0880D

EA000315