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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

December 16, 1983

TO ALL LICENSEES OF OPERATING REACTORS

Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: FAST COLD STARTS OF DIESEL GENERATORS
(Generic Letter 83-41)

Widespread concern has been expressed by the industry that fast cold start surveillance testing of diesel generators (i.e., starts with rapid acceleration and loading without prelubrication and warmup) may result in premature diesel engine degradation. The NRC staff is also concerned about the possible deleterious effects of fast cold starts on diesel generators. However, we require additional information about the extent and effects of this practice before we can make a determination as to whether the number of fast cold starts should be reduced.

Accordingly, we are requesting your voluntary participation in providing responses to the following questions:

1. How many times in the past year (December 1, 1982 to December 1, 1983) have your emergency diesel generators been subjected to a fast cold start (without prelubrication and warmup of any moving parts of the diesel generators)? Provide your data on a per machine basis, for each of the following three categories: (a) surveillance testing, (b) maintenance activities, and (c) actual demands.
2. What is your assessment of the effects of frequent fast cold starts on diesel generator reliability and availability? Do you believe that they significantly degrade reliability and availability?

This request for information was approved by the Office of Management and Budget under clearance number 3150-0011 which expires April 30, 1985. Comments on burden and duplication may be directed to the Office of Management and Budget, Reports Management Room 3208, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20503.

As the results of this effort will be used to make selected licensing decisions, we request your responses be received by the staff prior to January 6, 1984. The results of this and other efforts will be factored into our diesel generator reliability program. Your participation in this data collection effort is appreciated.

Enclosure: See Jacket

Darrell G. Eisenhut
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