

March 2, 2004

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-04-009

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region IV, Arlington, Texas, staff on this date.

Facility

Arizona Public Service Company
Palo Verde Unit 3
5951 Wintersburg Road
Tonopah, Arizona
Docket: 50-530
License No. NPF-74
PWR/CE80

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

SUBJECT: SHUTDOWN OF UNIT 3 FOR GREATER THAN 72 HOURS

DESCRIPTION:

The Palo Verde Unit 3 reactor will be shutdown for greater than 72 hours based on the items summarized below. On February 28, 2004, at about 7:40 a.m. MST, Palo Verde Unit 3 received an automatic main turbine trip due to a generator fault signal. A reduction in reactor power was automatically initiated and reactor power was stabilized at 40 percent. Plant engineering personnel were previously analyzing generator alarms and had recommended shutting down the turbine generator when the automatic main turbine trip occurred. Unit 1 is currently operating at full power and Unit 2 is in a forced outage for a steam generator tube leak.

Unit 3 was at full power, with normal temperature and pressure, prior to the turbine trip. Following the main generator trip, the licensee elected to shut down the reactor unit to investigate and repair the main generator problem. All systems operated normally during the reactor shut down.

On February 29, the licensee identified boric acid residue on the A03 pressurizer heater sleeve during a boric acid walkdown inspection of the containment building for Unit 3. The heater sleeve is made up of an Alloy 600 material. This boric acid presence is considered to represent a pressure boundary leakage and the licensee entered the appropriate technical specification and reached cold shutdown on March 1, 2004. Currently, the licensee is planning to install a mechanical nozzle seal assembly clamp as a repair strategy.

The licensee informed the resident inspectors of the turbine trip and plant shut down. The senior resident inspector responded to the site. Region IV informed NRR and the OEDO Coordinator on March 1, 2004. Region IV also notified the Public Affairs Officer and State Liaison Officer (SLO). The SLO informed the State of Arizona.

There was local press interest. This PN was discussed with the licensee to confirm technical accuracy prior to issuance.

This information is current as of 7:00 a.m. CST on March 2, 2004.

ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML040620045

CONTACT: Nancy L. Salgado; 817/276-6550