

January 24, 2006

RI-2004-A-0034

Mr. William Levis
Chief Nuclear Officer and Senior Vice President
PSEG Nuclear LLC - N09
P. O. Box 236
Hancocks Bridge, NJ 08038

Subject: NRC Office of Investigations Report 1-2004-017

Dear Mr. Levis:

The Region I Field Office of the NRC Office of Investigations (OI) initiated an investigation on April 1, 2004 (OI Case No. 1-2004-017), to determine whether Hope Creek control room staff or other PSEG officials deliberately violated a technical specification required alarm response procedure by failing to reduce reactor feed pump speed in response to a high vibration alarm that was received on November 1, 2003. OI found that on November 1, 2003, a high vibration alarm was received on the "C" Reactor Feed Pump (RFP). However, the shift crew on duty determined that the alarm had been previously identified and tagged as invalid, so they did not reduce RFP speed. A subsequent shift crew on November 2, 2003, determined that the previous determination was incorrect and that the specific alarm point that was alarming was not tagged as invalid. Implementation of the first step of the alarm response procedure was documented in the control room log, which required the severity of the alarm to be determined by checking local indication. The crew found that local data indicated below the alarm setpoint and a notification was written to document the problem and obtain resolution.

As documented in NRC Inspection Report 05000354/2003007, issued on January 26, 2004, the problem was not properly prioritized and evaluated in a timely manner. This resulted in continued operation noncompliant with the alarm response requirements for 17 days. The inspectors determined that this corrective action performance deficiency was of minor significance and not subject to formal enforcement action.

OI identified that some available information indicated that the point was above the alarm point. However Temporary Logs set up to specifically monitor vibration data during the period November 9 through 11, 2003, indicated the data was below the alarm point. OI interviews with involved personnel indicated that if, at any point, the operators or management were aware that they had an alarm that was validated by local data or if there was a concern about the pump condition, action would have been taken to implement the alarm response procedure beyond the first step. As a result, the NRC determined that there was insufficient evidence to indicate a deliberate violation of the procedure requirements occurred. Therefore, it was determined that this issue was appropriately dispositioned under the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process in NRC Inspection Report 05000354/2003007.

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Please note that final NRC documents, such as the OI report described above, may be made available to the public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) subject to redaction of information appropriate under the FOIA. Requests under the FOIA should be made in accordance with 10 CFR 9.23, Requests for Records, a copy of which is enclosed for your information.

Also, in accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter, its enclosure, and your response, if any, will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact Mr. M. Gray of my staff at (610) 337-5171.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Brian E. Holian, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Enclosure: 10 CFR 9.23, Requests for Records

Mr. William Levis

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