

February 20, 2006

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-III-06-005

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 III staff on this date.

Facility

LaSalle Unit 1
Exelon Generation Co.
Marseilles, IL
Docket: 50-373
License: NPF-11

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: INDICATION FAILURE FOR 3 CONTROL RODS FOLLOWING REACTOR TRIP

DESCRIPTION:

At 12:23 a.m. CST on February 20, 2006, the Unit 2 reactor shut down automatically from 6 percent power, and reactor instrumentation showed that three control rods failed to insert fully into the reactor core. There are 185 control rods which control reactor power level and which are fully inserted to shut down the reactor.

Because of the uncertainty of the position of the three control rods, the licensee declared a Site Area Emergency under its emergency plan at 12:28 a.m. A site area emergency is the second highest classification under the NRC emergency response system. The licensee notified appropriate state, local, and federal agencies according to its emergency plan.

Subsequently, the instrumentation showed that the reactor was shut down (i.e., subcritical) although the position indication for one control rod remained indeterminate. There was no indication of a release of radioactivity to the environment, and reactor conditions were stable.

At the time of the automatic reactor trip, the plant was being shut down for a refueling outage.

Following investigation of the control rod indication problems, the utility terminated the Site Area Emergency classification at 4:27 a.m.

The NRC entered the monitoring mode and staffed the Region III (Chicago) incident response center and the Headquarters Operations Center. The resident inspectors responded to the plant to monitor the licensee's response to the event.

Preliminary information showed that the reactor trip was caused by a malfunction of the plant's turbine control system.

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The licensee is investigating the cause of the turbine control system malfunction and the control rod indication anomalies.

Region III will initiate a special inspection to review the circumstances surrounding the event.

The State of Illinois has been notified of the event.

The licensee and the NRC will issue a news release on this event. Region III is prepared to respond to news media inquiries. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with licensee management.

The licensee notified Headquarters Operation of this event at 1:14 a.m. CST on February 20, 2006. This information is current as of 7 a.m. CST on February 20, 2006.