Official Transcript of Proceedings

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Title:

Interview of

(i)

Docket Number:

1-2003-045

Location:

Hancock's Bridge, New Jersey

Date:

Friday, November 7, 2003

Work Order No.:

NRC-1217

Pages 1-25

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Act, exemptions $\frac{7C}{2005-194}$

1	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA					
2	NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION					
3	+ + + +					
4	OFFICE OF THE INVESTIGATIONS					
5	INTERVIEW					
6	x					
7	IN THE MATTER OF:					
8	INTERVIEW OF : Docket No.					
9	: 1-2003-045					
10	(CLOSED) :					
11	x					
12	Friday, November 7, 2003					
13						
14	PSEG					
15	NRC Resident's Office					
16	Hancock's Bridge, NJ					
17						
18	The above-entitled interview was conducted					
19	at 5:30 a.m.					
20						
21	BEFORE:					
22	SPECIAL AGENT EILEEN NEFF, OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS					
23	ALSO PRESENT:					
24	SENIOR RESIDENT INSPECTOR DAN ORR					
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PROCEEDINGS

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5:30 A.M.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Today's date is

November 7, 2003 and the time is approximately 5:30

a.m. Speaking is Special Agent Eileen Neff, U.S.

NRC, Region 1, Office of Investigations. Also present
is Senior Resident Inspector Dan Orr from the Salem

Hope Creek Facility.

The interview is taking place at the Salem Hope Creek Facility and the interview is with

It may have been called something different way back but it's essentially the same position, the Salem side.

What follows will be interview an allegations raised by Dr. Kim (Phonetic) indicating that PSEG discriminated against her in her termination as a result of having raised concerns. The events primarily occurred that we'll be talking about 2002-2003. The subject matter concerns potential violations of 10 CFR 50.5 which deliberate misconduct and 50.7 which is employee protection.

What I would like to do is place you under

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oath before we continue the interview. Do you have any objection to swearing to the information? No. If you would raise SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: your right hand. Do you swear that the information that you're about to provide is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God? So help me God, I do. Thank you. Now if SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: you would for the record just state your name, spell -- identify your date of birth, your Social Security I need a home address and a home telephone. My name is Okay. I said it wrong. SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: I've heard worse. Sorry about that. SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: That's okay. My home phone number, due to events here I'm trying to keep that to My phone number and this will never be myself. revealed to the company?

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1	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: It would only be for
2	my use.
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5	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: And I ask for it just
6	in the event that I have to contact you.
7	That's fine. I've had a
8	problem,
9	So I may
10	have to have a cell phone, but for your purpose that
11	phone number would get through.
12	And what was the other there was
13	something else?
14	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Social Security
15	Number.
16	
17.	
18	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: And you are your
19	site telephone number?
20	I really don't have a desk
21	or anything. I have a back room, what they call it
22	it's
23	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: I see, okay.
24	It's not a very good
25	number, but you got me there that one day, you got
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lucky. I was actually there.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: It was timing I think.

Yes.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: What I would like to cover with you, we'll go back to a point in time in September of 2002, but I think before we get there, let me ask you how do you know and how long had you had work experience with

place for safety. Was going to talk to the masses, find out for what problems we were having and it was job to take that back to -- I don't know if it was at the time -- we change managers often. But it was job to collect information from the people in the field, find out what our weaknesses were and then take them to report, whoever that might have been at the time.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: At what point in time is this? When did you first become associated?

There was that -- in September 2002, we had a meeting, I guess in the Training Center. I knew existed before then, and I might have had some more informal maybe pass by conversations, but mostly at the Training Center, as

1	the entire shift of Bravo shift I've been on Bravo
2	shift for a while, we would have meetings. I know
3	that one day, but there might have been another
4	meeting somewhere along the line where was
5	involved.
6	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Was there something
7	that prompted interest in you? You mentioned
8	safety and some concerns that was going to take
9	forward. If it wasn't could it have been
10	at that time?
11	Yes, it could have been
12	
13	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: In 2002?
14	Right. Actually, I think
15	it was was working for. just
16	happened to be another manager on site at the time.
17	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay.
18	They change so often, but
19	I believe did work for at the time.
20	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Was there anything
21	that prompted this particular meeting or was this
22	routine? Did check in
23	There was incidents. One
24	that comes to mind was there had been a steam leak on
25	Unit 2 that a lot of people, including myself thought
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incidents. One a steam leak on g myself thought

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wasn't handled correctly and it was thought out to be a typical action by PSEG, I guess you call it Mass. (Phonetic), the people, the way they handle things. And at the same time they're lecturing us on how safe we should be, that that raised a big stir, everybody -- it got ugly as far as we were talking to management and management was talking to us and there was a lot of animosity. Do as we say and not as we do pretty much is what it comes down to.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: This incident, is this the one that involves shutting off the valve to correct the steam leak?



SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: And you're indicating that's not the first time that something like that had happened?

There's lots of stuff to go along here, in my opinion, isn't exactly the safe way to go, but again, you have to think about we're working at a nuclear power plant and half of it is a steam plant. If we want to be 100 percent safe, we'd all be lighting fires for light. I mean there's a tradeoff. Sometimes I think we exceed that.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Exceed which way?

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that.



Meaning we go places we

shouldn't go. We're a little more unsafe than we should be.

> We'll talk about SPECIAL AGENT NEFF:



Not conservative enough.

That's the word for you.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay, and I had indicated I will be talking to you about the work environment too, so I think we can talk about it at that point and to stay with this, what was the purpose of the meeting and for being there? The concerns and the type of concerns that were raised. How do you categorize them?

Everybody was concerned that that particular incident which was really a big event at that time and I feel it's really unsafe, was unsafe and so we were accusing management of being, do as I say not as I do. You're not doing anything. Everything -- all these meetings we have are just for It's just to show people out here we're being show. We turn right around, we close the door, go back to what we do and we're doing it the same old way we were.

> SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay.

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I want to refresh your -- I don't even know if I need to. Do you recall having e-mail back and forth with



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SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: I want to show you -
I don't remember the exact
e-mail, but yes, I remember there was e-mail.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: That's that I think

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: That's that I think I might need. And it's been a year. So I want to show you -- it notes that there's a number of concerns, so I'm trying to identify if that will help you. What I'm going to show you is this e-mail and it's dated September 24th, 2002.

We'll go off the record briefly, so you can have a chance to look at this, so there's no dead space.

(Off the record.)

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: We're back on the record after a brief break. It's about 6:42 a.m. and you just said to me that we're looking at a September 24, 2002 e-mail from yourself to And in it it's documenting a meeting that had just occurred and it had to do, I believe, with that incident at least it focused on that incident involving and the shutting off of the steam valve. Is that accurate?



That's accurate.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: In it -- in that first paragraph there you say "in the meeting a lot of

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1	concerns were aired. Some were focused on more than
2	others, but all were valid." Do you have any
3	recollection of any other concerns that were aired at
4	that time?
5	I would hate to guess at
6	it, to tell you the truth. I know it would be the
7	steam incident would be part of that. This is a long
8	time ago. I can't exactly say what the other concerns
9	were at that particular meeting.
10	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: If I can't be
11	specific, I'll try and categorize. Do you recall that
12	they were concerns of a nuclear safety nature in terms
13	of either potential license requirement violations or
14	technical specification violations?
15	They probably were.
16	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Do you recall
17	specifically what those might have been?
18	For the steam leak itself,
19	I figured it might have bordered on some of that.
20	Again, I can think of maybe five or six concerns now.
21	Whether or not those were the exact concerns I talked
22	to about that particular day, it's hard for me to
23	say.
24	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: If not you, were they
25	raised by the others that were present?

1	Again, probably, but being
2	under oath, I cannot say definitely.
3	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay. Do you have
4	documentation of anything else? Would you have had
5	some sort of a record of what was discussed?
6	I'd have to look myself.
7	I'd have to look. And I plan on doing that for you.
8	I have some other e-mails around this time that I
9	might be able to bring up.
10	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay. So we just
11	can't be specific as to other than this, we know
12	was what prompted the meeting.
13	Right.
14	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: The
15	incident.
16	That's correct.
17	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: You don't know
18	specifically what else might have been a part of a lot
19	of concerns were aired, but they're valid.
20	I remember a lot of
21	concerns were aired. On record, I could say a lot of
22	that would probably have to do around tech specs and
23	stuff like that, but again I wouldn't swear to what
24	exactly was at that meeting. 7C
25	MR. ORR: Do you know if any of it had to

do with equipment issues, procedure issues --1 Yes. 2 MR. ORR: Conduct of operations? 3 Yes. 4 Industrial safety? 5 MR. ORR: Probably. 6 MR. ORR: Okay. 7 I have concerns there, but 8 The first few he mentioned, 9 I couldn't swear to it. I'm sure that those were brought up. Conduct of 10 operations, that goes back to procedure 11 And being prompted, I can remember. 12 issues. 13 MR. ORR: I'm trying to help you. And we have a procedure 14 problem at the island and that it takes I'd say 15 16 forever, but it takes an extraordinary amount of time to get our procedures through and a lot of times the 17 procedures come through without any field knowledge to 18 them. mean they're all book knowledge, book 19 accurate, but when you apply it to the plant and the 20 way we do things, we have problems with them and they 21 22 don't get resolved in any kind of a timing manner, no. SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Do you have evidence 23 24 of that? getting harder 25 It's

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-	bookabo ener 10 accuracy geoderng become, as the ac-
2	that goes.
3	Back then no, I couldn't it's a year
4	ago and it's hard for me to say.
5	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay, but you might
6	have more documents and you can check?
7	I have to check into that
8	and I believe that the NCOs at the meeting had more of
9	a problem with that than we do, but yes.
10	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: The procedural?
11	The procedural issues,
12	yes.
13	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay. It would be
14	in here what you're doing is sorting out what some of
15	the concerns that you were saying were valid concerns
16	and from what you sorted out as NEO whining. So
17	there's some distinction made there in terms of what
18	was covered at the meeting.
19	Right. It wasn't just
20	this meeting, but at this meeting also when I have
21	a strong feeling that when NEOs speak up, we're low
22	class people. I believe we're treated as low class
23	people. We're respected only as low class people,
24	that when we complain about stuff that it gets brushed
25	away. They're just whining. Yes, they have shitty

1	jobs or whatever you want to say, but we're licensed,
2	so we don't have to listen to them. We know what's
3	wrong.
4	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: From what level are
5	you saying that you experience that?
6	Pretty much from the on
7	shift supervision right on up. That happened right on
8	shift, I believe, too.
9	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: So CRS level and OS
10	level?
11	From that level up.
12	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay.
13	MR. ORR: Is that any better now, any
14	worse, same?
15	A little bit better, but
16	not much better.
17	Eventually
18	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Compare the time
19	because we're talking so broadly here. You're
20	so in time frames where do you see where
21	are you in 2002, late 2002 as compared to now?
22	Better with the on shift
23	supervision. worse as far as the level on up.
24	Actually, right now, there's no cooperation between I
25	guess they're called shift managers or department

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managers, position.

Right now -- a lot of it has to do with the union, but it seems like two eight year olds right now are trying to run my life and I'm not happy with either of them in the department. I think morale is pretty much as low as it's been in a long time, but we have a serious issue going on right now. It's just nitpicking back and forth and the workers in the field are suffering.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: There's another comment in this September 24th e-mail. We're down in second paragraph and basically what you're to do is before moves forward advising with addressing the concerns that the heard at this other meeting that poll, at least poll the remaining individuals in the department for their concerns because you felt that others should be heard.

I don't like being a focused individual. I have concerns that might not be 80 percent of people's concerns, just because I happen to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. Maybe I see this concern where it really isn't, but when you're going to act on something you need to have a lot of information and that's pretty much what I'm

telling And I might now have been here a day 1 when something really serious might have happened. 2 There's a real other serious concern. 3 4 might not know it, so in order to get all your ducks 5 in a row, you need to talk to a lot of people. SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay, and then you go 6 7 on to say specifically, "the information asked for should be actions 8 of that the operations we, 9 department, have taken that in their opinion is 10 the safe operation of the nuclear 11 generating station. Actions that have not been taken, 12 not been in their opinion, taken with the needed level conservatism" -- it's too early for 13 14 "conservatism needed for this type of industry." 15 That focuses mostly on indicate, that 16 that steam leak with the 17 statement right there. 18 SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay, and then the other one is the last statement. "Actions that anyone -19 20 feels might have a negative impact on the station 21 should any outside influence get word of it." 22 What do you mean by that last statement? 23 I believe things can get glossed and filtered and cleaned up before they get 24 25 put into a final report. Maybe the NRC, I mean

anybody, NRC, EPA, anybody can get a hold of it and look at it, but generically, unless you want to get into a specific incident like the steam, the steam leak, I believe that bleeds into a lot of other stuff, like the BF19 issue that just happened a couple of weeks ago.

Here at Salem, it goes all the way back to the service water incident, the service water, they shut us down almost. They'll do anything and everything to keep the unit running. I mean that steam leak existed for hours. I mean you weren't here. That steam leak was bad. It was blown right across the group buses.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: That's what we're hearing.

steam leak I've ever seen in my life and they took hours and no action, just thinking about what are we going to do? What are we going to do to get out of this? We've got (Inaudible) coming in the morning, that's hours away. They should have been shutting that plant down. I mean they mainly should have said that's a safety issue we need to shut down.

MR. ORR: Was it 4 feet, 6 feet, 8 feet, 20 feet?

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2	large	eteam	lesk					

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Where I'm seeing some difficulty is trying to keep my -- and I understand and I appreciate where you would say this is in response to this question.

I'm going to try and go and save that for the second part of our interview today and try and do that.

did, but it's kind of hard for me to answer some of the questions without getting into more specific.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: And I'm asking so -the difficulty I see here is keeping these two
distinct. And I don't want to make you go into detail
at this point in time that I can get from you -- I'll
get from you just a little bit later.

Let me add one more thing.

mention, as far as hiring as much as says, there's people that run him as much as he runs me. I believe he did exactly what he was expected to do and he's in a position where he needed to do those things.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Go ahead.

1	I think he works on a I'm trying to
2	find words a mentality that's trained into him and
3	that's what he needs to do. He needs to keep the
4	station running. So was acting on his what
5	his job is supposed to be, I believe.
б	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay. I guess
7	overall, I guess what I'll ask you for this is I want
8	to come back to this section under the next area.
9	Did go ahead and poll other people, to
10	your knowledge?
11	I do not know. I know
12	was talking to a lot of people, but maybe just the
13	people at this meeting. I don't know if spread
14	out any further than
15	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Beyond that meeting
16	or you don't know? But at least at that one
17	particular time?
18	I pretty much trust that
19	talked to at least some people, not just me. So
20	yes, did attempt.
21	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: What happened then?
22	Did it happen that took these issues forward? Do
23	you know what the end result was here?
24	No. We were supposed to
25	get something back. What plan was going to be

1	and I don't think anything came
2	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: How did you know you
3	were going to get something back and you
4	We were told
5	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: You indicated he sent
6	to you, right? You got the indication that it was
7	sending to get the concerns developed
8	on all the different shifts?
9	That's correct. And from
10	said that there will be some kind of
11	synopsis, some kind of gathering of information and
12	their plans were going to be handed back out to the
13	people it involved.
14	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: This is what
15	said?
16	That's correct. I never
17	actually talked to fine or anybody like
18	that. It was strictly my own communication was with
19	
20	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay, so you got the
21	reasons why was there and what the information
22	would be used for from
23	That's correct.
24	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Did you get any
25	feedback from on what happened at all, after these

1	meetings?
2	Not that I
3	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: After you had this
4	e-mail with
5	Not that I remember, no.
6	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: You don't recall any?
7	I don't recall any
8	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: From or from any
9	other source?
10	Well, said actions
11	they're looking into it and we're going to develop a
12	plan and was involved as much as was
13	and we're going to work this out. As far as I could
14	tell it never really added up to or went anywhere.
15	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: But in terms of
16	having conversations with
17	specifically how anyone responded to these concerns?
18	No, I do not believe so,
19	no.
20	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Let me just go off
21	the record briefly. I want to review this and then
22	wrap it up. It's about 5:55 a.m.
23	(Off the record.)
24	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: It's approximately
25	5:58 a.m. We're back on the record.

1	In terms of the handling of the concerns
2	that were brought to attention and the
3	result of that having been brought to attention,
4	you had indicated you didn't have any conversation
5	with and you didn't really see any result. You
6	were supposed to get something, but you didn't see
7	anything. That would be documentary, verbal, meeting-
8	wise, anything.
9	No, I did not. I don't
10	remember getting anything other than maybe a rumor
11	here and there, but nothing from saying what they
12	were going to do, other than we were trying to do
13	something.
14	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: What were the rumors
15	about?
16	I guess they'd work up
17.	some kind of memo saying that we won't do this any
18	more. We won't do that any more. Memos that you've
19	seen a hundred times.
20	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: And this never
21	really, it didn't materialize?
22	No, it didn't materialize,
23	no70
24	SPECIAL AGENT NEFF; Okay. Did you want
25	to add anything to that situation?

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it.

anything to come out of it. I've seen efforts and actions before. I believe them to be placating the guys, guys being the workers in the field to make them think that things are going to -- big actions are

really expect that anything was going to come out of

going to happen to make the place safer, but I don't

It usually subsides for a while after something like that, but I don't really expect it any more. I've been there. I've seen flavors of the month come and go and I'd see all of that mostly as a waste of money. Unfortunately, I might have even said that at that meeting that. job was pretty much just placating them with a pacifier to wait out the storm.

SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay.

success stories had. been doing this with maintenance and I said what have you done to improve things here? What have your actions done to make anything safer and couldn't come up with one example. Trying. I honestly believe was trying, but couldn't at that time come up with any example of any of actions turning around with

is

time

specific result of making anything safer or better. 1 2 SPECIAL AGENT NEFF: Okay. We'll end this one and we'll continue the discussion on the work 3 4 environment. 5 Okay. 6 SPECIAL NEFF: The AGENT 7 approximately 6 a.m. We'll go off the record and 8 thank you for your time on this. 9 (Whereupon, at 6 a.m., the interview was 10 concluded.) 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

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