UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

INTERVIEW

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IN THE MATTER OF: :

INTERVIEW OF : Docket No.

[redacted] : 1-2003-051F

(CLOSED) : 7C

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Thursday, October 23, 2003

Conference Room

Salem/Hope Creek Nuclear Power

Station

Hancock's Bridge, New Jersey

The above-entitled interview was conducted at 4:30 p.m.

BEFORE:

Special Agent MARK A. ANDERSON

Information in this record was deleted
in accordance with the Freedom of Information
Act, exemptions 7C
FOIA- 2005-194

1 ALSO PRESENT:

2 MARK FERDAS

3 Hope Creek Resident Inspector

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5 CHARLES HASSLER

6 IBEW LOCAL 94 Business Representative

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

4:30 p.m.

SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Today is October 23, 2003. The time is now approximately 4:30 p.m. This is an interview today with [redacted] This interview is being conducted in a Conference Room at the Salem Generating Station. Present at this interview are myself, Mark A. Anderson, a Special Agent with the Office of Investigations, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Region I, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.

Also present is Mark Ferdas, Hope Creek Resident Inspector. Also here today with [redacted] is Charles Hassler, business agent for IBEW Local 94. This interview is being recorded and a transcript will be prepared. Prior to going on the record, [redacted] indicated that he would like to have the transcript made available to him after it's returned so that he can look at it for accuracy.

The subject matter of this interview concerns the safety conscious work environment and issues related to it here at the Salem and Hope Creek Station. At this time, [redacted] I would ask you if you would raise your right hand so I can swear you in.

1 WHEREUPON,

2 [redacted]

3 was called as a witness and, having been first duly

4 sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

5 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: If you could

6 state your full name for the record please.

7 [redacted]

8 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Your address.

9 [redacted]

10 [redacted]

11 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Your current job

12 title.

13 [redacted]

14 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Your home phone

15 number.

16 [redacted]

17 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Your work number.

18 [redacted]

19 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Date of birth.

20 [redacted]

21 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Social security

22 number.

23 [redacted]

24 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: If you will just

25 tell me a little bit about your education history and

1 how you got into the nuclear industry.

2 [redacted]

3 [redacted]

4 [redacted]

5 [redacted]) I needed a job. Here I have been ever

6 since, [redacted] years.

7 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: People don't

8 stick that long in one place anymore.

9 ([redacted]) No.

10 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So you came in.

11 I assume you have held a variety of positions here.

12 ([redacted]) Yes, I came in as a [redacted]

13 [redacted]) which is a helper in the maintenance

14 department. I went to what they call the [redacted]

15 [redacted]) Then I was promoted to ([redacted]) Back

16 a few years ago, the union negotiated what they call

17 a ([redacted]) which combined the job of the

18 electrician and the INC technician.

19 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So you have had

20 that position for how long would you say?

21 ([redacted])

22 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Your current

23 supervisor would be who?

24 ([redacted]) My current supervisor would

25 be ([redacted])

1 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What would his
2 position be?
3 ([redacted])
4 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So we talked a
5 little bit off the record before we came on about what
6 we're looking at as the subject matter to ask you
7 about. I guess the first thing I would want to ask
8 you about is if you had a nuclear safety concern here
9 do you know how you would raise it.
10 ([redacted]) Yes, I would suspect I have
11 a few avenues to raise a nuclear safety concern.
12 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What would your
13 choices be? What would be the one you would normally
14 choose?
15 ([redacted]) The one that I would
16 normally choose on a nuclear safety concern, it
17 depends on how immediate it was. If it was immediate,
18 my concern would go right to the shift supervisor in
19 the plant in the operations department.
20 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: If you didn't
21 perceive it as immediate.
22 ([redacted]) I would probably take it up
23 through the ranks through first line supervisor, my
24 manager.
25 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What other

1 mechanisms might be available that you could use?

2 ([redacted]) There's the employee

3 concerns. They try to get you to go that route.

4 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: If you raised it

5 through your managers, would that be through the

6 corrective action program?

7 ([redacted]) No, verbally. I'm not a

8 big guy on writing notifications and that kind of

9 stuff.

10 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Have you raised

11 nuclear safety concerns before, any personally where

12 you have seen an issue that needed to be addressed?

13 ([redacted]) What do you mean by

14 "nuclear safety concerns?" Are we talking about

15 reactor-type safety? Are we talking about safety

16 where there's a ladder out there on the deck that

17 isn't tied down?

18 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: I think that

19 would fall into more the industrial safety area.

20 MR. FERDAS: Well, if it would affect a

21 piece of equipment from operating correctly which

22 failure on that would then get into would that cause

23 a trip of the reactor or cause a safety function not

24 to operate. I guess an example would be scaffolding

25 that would interfere with a valve opening or closing.

1 Do you know what I mean? It would affect the
2 equipment in an adverse way. I think that's the
3 question.
4 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: If it's just an
5 industrial safety thing, that kind of applies too
6 because I see that falling into the same arena as far
7 as what's management's response to it. Are they
8 interested in resolving it? I guess what I'm getting
9 at is have you raised issues before through whatever
10 mechanism you chose and how were they handled?
11 ([redacted]) I'm sure I have. You have
12 to remember too I'm one of the ([redacted]) so I not only
13 raise issues myself but I help others raise issues.
14 It can be myself. I can't think of anything off the
15 top of my head recently. We have this tagging thing
16 going on right now.
17 I'm a member of the safety tagging
18 committee. That's how we get those things resolved,
19 through the committee. Generally when I see something
20 or hear about something, I do exactly what I said. I
21 go through the ranks and get it resolved. I can't
22 think of anything off the top of my head that was so
23 immediate that it had to be dealt with now.
24 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: When you go
25 through the ranks like that, how is the response to

1 that? What is your experience?

2 [redacted] It depends. Sometimes the

3 response is good. Sometimes it's not so good. It

4 depends on how the person you bring it up to sees it

5 as an immediate concern. That's usually the problem

6 we have on the bargaining unit side where it's not

7 such an issue with a manager as it would be with the

8 working guy.

9 I think that's probably one of the biggest

10 complaints now. It's issues that are raised are put

11 on the back burner if you look at it in our

12 perspective. The management person will tell you

13 you're right and it is a concern but it's not the top

14 thing on their agenda. Sometimes they are right.

15 Overall, I think the issues that are

16 raised are addressed. I can't think of anything that

17 was serious that was never addressed according to

18 reactor safety or nuclear safety. It's always that

19 grey area where we think something should be taken

20 care of immediately and maybe they don't.

21 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Does it usually

22 get taken care of but it takes a while?

23 [redacted] Yes, that's probably the

24 general sense from me personally and the people I

25 represent. It takes too long. The tagging issues

1 that we have here is probably the most prominent right
2 now. We just don't feel management is jumping on it
3 fast enough. Do you know what I mean?
4 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Right.
5 [redacted] We think it's an immediate
6 concern because it could lead to injury. There was a
7 day when they would stop work and correct it. They
8 prioritize tagging concerns now. If it's an
9 administrative-type thing, then it's not such a
10 serious thing as a physical tagging error. We feel
11 they are all the same. Administrative tagging error
12 can lead to something unsafe.
13 MR. FERDAS: Can you explain what you mean
14 by "administrative?"
15 [redacted] Somebody didn't sign on a
16 tag in the SAP system or something like that, the
17 tagging on the nomenclature was wrong even though it
18 was put on the right spot, what was written on the tag
19 was wrong, that would be something administrative.
20 The more serious ones would be a tag that wasn't hung
21 that should have been hung.
22 The recent ones were they pulled out what
23 they call PT drawers on the bus. It's the diffusers
24 that protect the bus work. They forgot to put a tag
25 on it. The guy pulled the drawer out hot for KV which

1 is potential serious hazard.

2 MR. FERDAS: What unit was this on?

3 [redacted] This would be Unit II. So

4 that's a hot item in our opinion. Of course, we go

5 berserk, the union guys. Of course, they realize it

6 was a concern and it was an issue. That was one in a

7 series of tagging issues that we've had at the start

8 of this outage.

9 We want to take a little bit more drastic

10 approach when something happens and stop work. We

11 want to stop work. We want people to sit down.

12 Anymore, work just continues on. They address it.

13 They fix it, but the work can't stop anymore like it

14 used to when it comes to these tagging issues.

15 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: How recent is

16 that change where it used to stop versus how it is

17 now? Is that recent?

18 [redacted] Three or four years I

19 guess. When we had a tagging incident, we had a stand

20 down. Stand down was all work on the item stopped for

21 a period of time, stopped, came to a grinding halt.

22 You sat and you discussed it. You managed to come up

23 with a game plan, how to fix it, and roll it down.

24 Stand downs now are the boss comes out and

25 talks to you at the beginning of your shift or a

1 manager comes down and talks to everybody at the
2 beginning of the shift but things keep on rolling. Of
3 course, the union guys also feel it has more effect
4 when you stop. We don't stop around here anymore. We
5 have to keep rolling.
6 We've had four or five or six tagging
7 incidents since the outage started, three the first
8 three days. Anything from not hanging the tag in the
9 right spot or hanging the red blocking tags with
10 yellow blocking tags, a lot of administrative-type
11 errors. Our tagging committee of course jumps on it
12 right away and tries to find the problem, solution.
13 Most of the union guys that are on the committee feel
14 that enough isn't addressed immediately when we have
15 a tagging error anymore. They don't stop. They just
16 keep right on going. It's not like they don't ignore
17 it. They will fix the problem right then and then
18 move on.
19 Right now, we're at a heightened awareness
20 amongst ourselves that we're afraid something is going
21 to happen for numerous reasons with our tagging
22 system; lack of knowledge when people are hanging
23 tags, the complicated system that we have for tagging
24 in the SAP. That's probably the biggest thing we have
25 going on right now.

1 MR. FERDAS: How are the suggestions from
2 the tagging group taken? I guess the goal is you
3 don't want to have any tagging errors.
4 ([redacted]) Right, no tagging errors.
5 MR. FERDAS: They seem to keep occurring.
6 So the corrective actions taken so far have not been
7 fully effective.
8 ([redacted]) Exactly.
9 MR. FERDAS: Is that due to not
10 implementing the recommendations that are coming from
11 the group or are you guys using those recommendations
12 and they are just not meeting the mark?
13 ([redacted]) Not meeting the mark. It
14 seems like it's a different situation each time. So
15 it poses a new set of problems where we need a new set
16 of corrective actions.
17 MR. FERDAS: So you are not getting
18 repeats. It's a new different phenomenon each time.
19 ([redacted]) Yes.
20 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Do you find in
21 both your experience and helping out the people from
22 the union standpoint that the people raising those
23 concerns get retaliated against in any way? Do
24 supervisors treat the employees differently? Does it
25 make their work situation harder to deal with?

1 [redacted] I have never seen it. I
2 have never heard of it. I have never had anybody
3 complain to me that because they raised a concern they
4 have been retaliated against.
5 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Have you had
6 people indicate to you that they didn't want to raise
7 concerns?
8 [redacted] Yes, you have people that
9 are afraid to do that because they have it in their
10 heads that there's a notion that something might
11 happen to them, that they might get the tough jobs or
12 something like that. But personally, I haven't seen
13 it.
14 I have seen more ineffectiveness in
15 raising concerns than I have in retaliation. The
16 employee concerns program, you hear more people
17 complain about that after they go there. They really
18 didn't do anything for them. That's more of the
19 complaint.
20 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: You have heard
21 that before. Do they do something with their
22 complaint?
23 [redacted] It depends on the person.
24 Some people let it drop. Some people keep right on
25 going. I recently was involved in employee concerns

where an accusation was made against a technician that he might have reset an alarm in the detection area and he didn't and he did not document it.

He took it to employee concerns. He didn't really get the action at employee concerns. He didn't get the response he wanted. It was a we took care of it kind of thing. So he went to the QA department. Both of us went to the QA department and had the guy who investigated the situation look back into it and remove any word or any inference of this technician in the QA assessment report and got action that way.

SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Right.

[redacted] We went to the source. That's me. I'm the [redacted] that's been here a long time. I know who to go to and what buttons to push. Would the average employee know to do that? Some would. Some wouldn't depending on how they feel and how their personality make up is.

You are talking to a guy that is not afraid to walk in the Vice President's door and say yes we have problems. Other employees I don't feel would do that. The [redacted] know pretty much how to get things done. That's why a lot of people come to the [redacted] to handle things themselves.

1 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Some people don't
2 have the personality to raise the issues I guess.
3 ([redacted]) Right.
4 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Or they are
5 fearful or raising them whether that's reality or not,
6 right?
7 ([redacted]) Right. As far as
8 retaliation, I have never seen it. We would not let
9 that happen. We would bitch until something happened
10 to that person. First line supervisors, for the most
11 part, listen to your concerns. Supervisors are not
12 the problem. It's when that concern gets up higher
13 where that manager or superintendent or whoever feels
14 it's a priority or not. That's where the conflict
15 comes in.
16 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Well, would those
17 higher levels then take it out on the first line
18 supervisors or take it out on people up the chain?
19 Have you ever heard of that happening? Do you
20 understand what I'm saying?
21 ([redacted]) Yes. No, I wouldn't say I
22 have ever heard of a situation where a supervisor got
23 in trouble for addressing an employee concern. No, I
24 would say for the most part the management down here
25 is very cognoscente of the fact that they would get in

1 big trouble if they tried to stifle people.

2 Like I said, they promote you to come

3 forward. It's whether their actions meet the needs of

4 the person who comes forward is a different question.

5 Sometimes it's legitimate, the guy's bitch is

6 legitimate. Sometimes it isn't. I can give you an

7 example, indicating lights on the equipment throughout

8 the station. One equipment operator's concern was

9 that the repair of the lights wasn't being taken care

10 of.

11 So he addressed the concern notification.

12 He didn't hear anything back from the notification.

13 So he kept going up the ladder until he finally got

14 hold of the first line supervisor. They pretty much

15 told him it is being taken care of. Indicating

16 lights, there are all different problems with them.

17 Some are that we don't have the parts. Some we have

18 on order. It's not a priority.

19 The switch 13 KB breaker has an indicating

20 light and it's not a priority. We're getting to it.

21 It's being put in the schedule. Well, that wasn't

22 good enough for him. He kept pushing and pushing to

23 the point where I had to go up to him and say that's

24 enough. You got your concern though. Maybe they are

25 right.

1 Is there one indicating light that is
2 going to affect operation in this plant? The guy said
3 no, it's just an issue. I think it's a big issue, and
4 they are not moving fast enough. Okay. Move on. You
5 have bigger issues. Move on.
6 So that's where you run into so many
7 employees who feel their concerns are priority. Then
8 you try to explain to employees you have to let
9 management manage. Let them make the decision on
10 whether an indicating light needs to be changed
11 tomorrow or at the next outage.
12 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: They are not
13 necessarily looking at the big picture. They are
14 focused on their one concern.
15 [redacted]: I'll tell you what. Once
16 you empower these employees down here, you give them
17 this notification process and stuff, as a boss you are
18 going to have a headache. These people think that's
19 their tool and you better take care of it. I think
20 that's one of the problems management has, explaining
21 to that employee that's not the big issue right now.
22 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Right. So
23 sorting through it, prioritizing it, somehow trying to
24 placate the employee and getting the thing taken care
25 of but taking care of what's important first.

1 [redacted] Yes.

2 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: You think overall

3 they are trying to do that.

4 [redacted] Yes, I think overall they

5 are trying to do that.

6 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: With the ECP

7 program, if somebody files a complaint with them or

8 goes to them, is it your experience that ECP gets back

9 to them and lets them know what's going on or they

10 find out eventually the results of that?

11 [redacted] Yes, I think for the most

12 part they get back to them. They let them know. I

13 think the biggest complaint is there really is no

14 action taken. My experience with them and being with

15 people with them, it's more of a fact finding type

16 thing. That guy goes and looks and interviews people

17 and that's it. That has no --

18 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: No teeth to it.

19 [redacted] No teeth. Most people

20 don't use them anymore. I would say in my personal

21 experience that less and less people go to them

22 because of the results.

23 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So there is

24 nothing significant coming out of there that would

25 cause people to go to them.

1 [redacted] Right, and the other
2 problem you have which I try to explain to employees
3 is there are sometimes results where management can't
4 get back to you. A perfect example is we had a shift
5 supervisor a while ago who didn't know how to control
6 the way he talked in morning meetings. He was
7 verbally abusive to people.
8 He cursed. He cursed at you. People went
9 to employee concerns. Okay. We're taking care of it.
10 Now, that shift supervisor is out in the training
11 center now. Was that a result of all the complaints
12 he had or was it time for him to move? I tried to
13 explain management is not going to come back and tell
14 you we moved a guy because of that. They are just not
15 going to do that.
16 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Right.
17 [redacted] So sometimes the employee
18 concerns, maybe they are doing something and you they
19 can't come back and tell you. I would say there's a
20 case of that. I would say more times than not I hear
21 more people complaining that I really didn't get
22 satisfaction.
23 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What about the
24 corrective action -- I'm sorry.
25 MR. FERDAS: You get to hear what their

1 issues are. Were they fair do you think?

2 [redacted] Who?

3 MR. FERDAS: Employee concerns on what

4 those issues were. Are they always wrong? Sometimes

5 you could say I could see where employee concerns took

6 that position.

7 [redacted] That's the thing. They

8 don't take positions. Employee concerns just takes

9 facts whether they are supposed to or that's their

10 charge I don't know.

11 MR. FERDAS: They don't draw conclusions.

12 [redacted] They don't. They will say

13 that we talked to this person and that something is

14 happening or that you are right and we gave the

15 recommendation to the manager. Employee concerns is

16 more or less the middle man. It doesn't judge

17 anybody. That's one of the problems.

18 If you give it to the manager who doesn't

19 want to do anything about it, you as an employee are

20 blaming employee concerns that they didn't do

21 anything. Now, whether they are supposed to, I don't

22 know. It doesn't seem like to me they have, like you

23 said, the teeth. The people they put in there don't

24 have the power. I can tell you that. These guys are

25 just first line supervisors.

1 I have sat in many of them. Many
2 bargaining unit persons take their [redacted] with them
3 when they go to employee concerns. I have sat in many
4 of them. They take the facts. Then they go out and
5 get back to you and say I gave it to this guy.
6 MR. FERDAS: They are accurate in the fact
7 that they present to management.
8 [redacted]: Pretty much, yes.
9 MR. FERDAS: They are not hiding anything
10 or taking stuff out or anything.
11 [redacted] I wouldn't say so. I have
12 never seen that. I would say in their defense if
13 there was any inaction it was because the person they
14 gave it to decided not to act on it. Like I said,
15 sometimes you just don't know. I got interviewed one
16 time because a complaint arose about a manager who had
17 something to me off color off the job.
18 This was a VP and somebody heard about it.
19 Then employee concerns came and interviewed me. It
20 was no big thing with me. From what I heard, they
21 ostracized the guy. So in that case, somebody did
22 something to the guy. So you just don't know when
23 it's working I think.
24 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Right. What
25 about the corrective action program? I know that's

1 not your favorite tool. When it's used, is it
2 effective? Do they get at the issues? Do they
3 resolve the issues?
4 [redacted]: I don't know.
5 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: You don't have a
6 clue.
7 [redacted] Because I don't usually
8 file the corrective action. It just takes such a long
9 period of time. I can tell you most of the stuff that
10 I have been involved in with corrective actions. I
11 just don't know the results or take time to look at
12 the results when they come out. Sometimes I see
13 corrective action reports, but I don't know.
14 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Do you know
15 anybody that's filed one? Much like ECP, do people
16 get back to them to let them know what's being done
17 with it? Do you know?
18 [redacted]: I don't think of corrective
19 actions as being filed. Corrective action is
20 something that they do after they find out there's a
21 problem.
22 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What do they use
23 here to report something?
24 [redacted] Notification.
25 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Then the

1 notification would be put into the corrective action
2 program.
3 [redacted] Yes. You hear complaints
4 across the board with notifications. They didn't do
5 anything. They did something. They add to my
6 notifications and I don't know about it. They put it
7 off to another manager that has nothing to do with it.
8 When it comes to notifications, you hear everything.
9 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Do they have a
10 way to track those on the computer system?
11 [redacted] Yes.
12 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So they enter
13 them in and then they show who they are assigned to
14 and everything like that.
15 [redacted] Yes. Some guys like
16 myself, I'm not a big notification guy other than the
17 fact that I use notifications to report my work when
18 I calibrate a switch that's off or something like
19 that. But use notifications as a complaint system, I
20 don't do that. A lot of people don't because they
21 don't feel --
22 MR. FERDAS: If you were walking in the
23 plant and you saw something that didn't look right,
24 what would you do?
25 [redacted] I would notify my

1 supervisor. Either he would write the notification or
2 instruct me to depending on the supervisor.
3 MR. FERDAS: Have you ever run into a
4 situation where they said that they would write the
5 notification and never wrote the notification?
6 [redacted]) Not that I know of.
7 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Would you even
8 know if you don't track them?
9 [redacted]:) If I didn't follow up, I
10 wouldn't know.
11 MR. FERDAS: Just in case there was one
12 that you were passionate about and it was one that you
13 wanted to follow.
14 [redacted]) I don't know.
15 MR. FERDAS: Have you heard any stories of
16 any people being squashed as they say? They went to
17 the supervisor to write it and they say no I'm not
18 going to write that for you.
19 [redacted]:) No, I have never heard
20 anything like that because you can write it yourself.
21 If a supervisor said that, okay, I would write it
22 myself. Most supervisors will tell you to write your
23 own. No, I have never heard that. It's more of a
24 complaint that it didn't get taken care of or it got
25 blow off or something like that. You hear that a lot.

1 MR. FERDAS: The corrective action piece
2 to it.
3 [redacted]: Yes.
4 MR. FERDAS: Not identifying the problem.
5 [redacted] Right, no. The other big
6 complaint is the level gets reduced at management's
7 discretion. You hear guys complain. For instance in
8 this tagging issue, we felt it was a level one or
9 level two, serious. They made it an X, a three.
10 MR. FERDAS: It was a three and then an X.
11 [redacted] I'm not up on the
12 definitions. X means it's typographical or something
13 like that.
14 MR. FERDAS: Yes, it could be a procedure
15 change.
16 [redacted] I heard that they
17 downgraded it from a couple of the guys on the tagging
18 committee. I guess they didn't think it was such a
19 serious thing. They downgraded the notification.
20 MR. FERDAS: Is there a big one that has
21 rolled up all of these issues?
22 [redacted] No.
23 MR. FERDAS: They are all threes and Xs.
24 [redacted] Yes, unless you have what
25 they call a breakthrough event or something like that.

1 I don't know what they categorize that.

2 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Do they do

3 anything here with regard to trending where they are

4 seeing the same issues arising? If they are seeing

5 several tagging issues or if they are seeing several

6 of them, then they would start giving them a higher

7 priority because of a trend developing.

8 MR. FERDAS: They have that option.

9 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: But that's

10 management discretion as well.

11 MR. FERDAS: Right, I believe so or an

12 employee can raise that this has happened a lot. They

13 can try to put it in as a level one or a level two.

14 At the morning review, then management could downgrade

15 it.

16 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So that would be

17 a separate notification type thing.

18 MR. FERDAS: Right.

19 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Do one saying

20 we're seeing a lot of these.

21 MR. FERDAS: Yes, that's an option and

22 then it could be downgraded.

23 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So these things

24 get entered in. You could follow them but you really

25 don't know eventually what happens.

1 [redacted]: Yes, you can. There's a
2 way to find out what happens. I said I don't. I
3 can't remember the last one that was so big that it
4 was that important to me.
5 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: To follow.
6 [redacted]: Yes. If it was a safety
7 issue, I would go the other route. We would
8 immediately call safety and get something resolved.
9 Management encourages people to use notifications for
10 anything. I don't believe it's to document every
11 little thing that happens in the plant.
12 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Right.
13 [redacted]: Then I think it slows down
14 the system. If we have a safety issue that's an
15 immediate concern, we're going right to the people and
16 getting them out there and we're resolving it. That
17 one wouldn't get turned into a notification.
18 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Okay. As far as
19 people being aware of the notification system and the
20 corrective action program, that's being accomplished
21 from management. They convey that. Everybody knows
22 what the ground rules are and what needs to be done.
23 [redacted]: I don't know of anybody
24 that doesn't know.
25 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: You say most

1 everybody knows about the ECP program.

2 ([redacted]): Yes.

3 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Do you feel that

4 supervisors are pretty good about letting their people

5 know to please raise things up the chain of command?

6 ([redacted]): Supervisors that I have

7 been in touch with, yes, they are pretty good at it.

8 They handle it pretty well on that. As a matter of

9 fact, you will hear supervisors make the suggestion

10 you have this option available to you when an employee

11 has something he is pretty passionate about.

12 I think the supervisors are pretty much on

13 board with that because they are going to get asked

14 that. When somebody gets in trouble or something, the

15 first thing the boss is going to say is did you tell

16 him to get his butt out to employee concerns or

17 employee assistance program or whatever else we have.

18 So they have to do that.

19 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So you think

20 that's coming down from up higher. There's an

21 effective mechanism to get that down.

22 ([redacted]): Yes, that's pretty much it.

23 It's just the end result. I don't know that everybody

24 is on board or happy with it all the time.

25 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: But you don't

1 think that the reason that people are not happy with
2 it is because management is trying to blow things off.
3 I hear you saying that it's more prioritization and
4 trying to keep things moving and running okay.
5 [redacted] That's what it looks like
6 to me.
7 MR. FERDAS: Have you ever been asked to
8 work faster, to move faster than what you are doing or
9 to skip steps in procedures or anything like that to
10 get the work done?
11 [redacted] No, I have never been asked
12 to skip steps. That would be suicide around this
13 place if you were a supervisor to do something like
14 that. To move faster, yes, guys we need to get this
15 done. I think that's the common complaint when we're
16 in LCOs. No supervisor says you are going to go out
17 there and get this done.
18 It's more the we're running an 18 hour LCO
19 guys. We don't need to be sitting around the shop and
20 that kind of stuff. To say there is no time pressure,
21 sure there's time pressure. Everybody has their own
22 little perception of the time pressure. When you have
23 72 hours to get the diesel back in, they want you to
24 work. It's as simple as that.
25 MR. FERDAS: But nothing to compromise

1 safety.

2 [redacted] No, like I said, if it's

3 out there, I don't see it. None of the [redacted]

4 have reported back to me because we wouldn't allow it,

5 some supervisor telling some guy to do something just

6 to get it done. I haven't heard of it. You might

7 hear an employee say he pushed me along pretty fast to

8 get out there and he was really concerned and he made

9 me move faster and I screwed up and that kind of

10 stuff. You might hear something. But for somebody to

11 blatantly verbally, I haven't had that experience.

12 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: So the concept of

13 a culture of production over safety, you don't see

14 that. That doesn't take place here.

15 [redacted] I don't see it as the

16 culture. I think it's starting to happen a little

17 more. I just think since deregulation that you see

18 there is more of an emphasis on money, budget, units

19 being down than there used to be. Things are moving

20 along faster. I think some of the tagging issues are

21 because we don't stop anymore.

22 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: I was going to

23 ask if that couples in with that concept of no work

24 stoppages.

25 [redacted] Yes, we keep right on going

1 because we have a time schedule. Management will also
2 tell you I think these guys can handle this load.
3 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: But I hear you
4 say that you feel that does have a little bit of an
5 adverse effect on safety.
6 [redacted] Sure, it does. We see it
7 in this tagging thing right now which is the biggest
8 thing. I don't see it in people not building things
9 right, scaffolding not being built right or anything
10 like that.
11 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: But it's more of
12 that mind set of just sitting down and stopping and
13 going over this and making sure everybody is on the
14 same sheet of music and then getting back to work.
15 [redacted] Yes, I thought it worked
16 when we used to do it. I thought it was a good tool.
17 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What about
18 raising issues to the NRC? Do you think people feel
19 that's an avenue they have available? If that's their
20 first choice or their last choice, do you think that
21 people recognize that as an avenue they have
22 available?
23 [redacted] Yes, my experience has been
24 if some individual perceives that if he went to the
25 NRC something would happen to them, I think that's his

own perception. I have never been stopped. I am not only speaking for myself, but other people, I have no problem telling a supervisor I want to go to the NRC. Some use it as a button. Do you know what I mean?

SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Right.

[redacted] Because that supervisor is like do you want me to tell about it. Can I take care of it first? But I have never seen anybody stopped in all the years I have been here.

SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: You haven't seen anybody that all of a sudden they are pulling all the worst electrical jobs on the plant as a result of doing that.

[redacted] No, I have never seen it.

SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: If people are talked to by the NRC, do you think they are candid with them? I guess the concern is sometimes they will do these inspections where they will go in and talk to people and say do you feel free to raise issues to the NRC and will you be open with them.

Everybody always says yes. Then sometimes they are doing an investigation and we ask that same questions. Then they say we just don't feel like we should stay away from them and stuff like that. Do you see that as an issue at all?

1 [redacted] I don't see that as an
2 issue. I'm sure there are individuals like that. I
3 don't see it as an issue where management has put that
4 on. I don't see that.
5 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Personality issue
6 then.
7 [redacted]: Yes, it's just some guys
8 are afraid to open their mouths.
9 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Or somebody is
10 going to be out to get me if I do.
11 [redacted] Yes. The years I have been
12 here I have not seen it. I would say we would do
13 something about it if we heard somebody complaining
14 that they were being retaliated against because they
15 went to the NRC. Maybe it's out there, but I don't
16 see a manager putting themselves in that position.
17 They would be crazy.
18 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Have you seen any
19 formal or informal surveys done here with regard to
20 safety culture?
21 [redacted] Tons of them.
22 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What is your
23 thought of those surveys?
24 [redacted]: We don't see the results of
25 surveys. I think they are very ineffective. There's

too many. That's one of our problems. We get them coming from all different ways in the company. The employee benefits people want to do a survey. The employee concerns people want to do a survey. EAP wants to do a survey. Safety wants to do a survey. I see more guys just tossing them. You get bombarded with them. There hasn't been one for a while. For a while there, it was every other time sit down and fill out this survey. And I'm not sure how accurate they are. It depends on what your mood is. Are you pissed off today? How are you going to answer that survey?

SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: As far as you know in the ones you have seen, you haven't seen the results of them anyhow to know how they came out.

[redacted] The last one I saw was the big corporate one. I can't remember what it was about. It was the overall employee attitude. I saw those results because they posted them in the big PSE&G Newspaper. But other ones I don't remember seeing results.

MR. FERDAS: What about five months ago? There was a safety conscious work environment on outlook. I don't know if you saw it. Did you see that one?

[redacted] I don't remember. It was

on outlook.

MR. FERDAS: Yes, it was on the outlook where you go to the website. I don't know how many computers you have near here, the electronic newsletter.

[redacted] Yes, it's the same thing. I'm sure some of them have been there. I can tell you I don't look at that all the time. Some guys don't have access to computers, so putting their results on the computer is ineffective. The bargaining unit guys don't have their own computers. They have shop computers. Some bargaining unit departments don't have any at all. They don't use them at all. If they do the results on the computer, it would be ineffective.

SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What's your overall assessment of the safety culture at Salem/Hope Creek?

[redacted] Right now, I would say overall the culture is better. Is it better than a month ago? I don't know. It's definitely better than two years ago, three years ago without a doubt. I have seen results of that. The safety of PPE, protective equipment, your hardhat, your glasses, wearing harnesses, we are so far better than we were

1 just five to six years ago in all that stuff, use of
2 ladders, definitely better. Some of our information
3 coming from our job safety observations prove that.
4 MR. FERDAS: What about the equipment
5 performance? What would you say, gotten better,
6 gotten worse?
7 [redacted] We're running longer. So
8 I would assume -- I have no --
9 MR. FERDAS: Generalization.
10 [redacted] Yes, I have no proof. For
11 a while there, we were running breaker to breaker. We
12 had some problems in the last couple of months. Other
13 than that, I would say that's a barometer. But I have
14 no statistics or anything to say this is getting worse
15 or that's getting worse. You hear general
16 complaints. For instance, service water at
17 Hope Creek, you hear the mechanics complain about that
18 right now. There should be some upgrades. They are
19 letting things go a little bit there. Overall, you
20 always hear parts problems and that kind of stuff,
21 don't have the parts. They sold everything in the
22 warehouse or whatever that was. I can't get this. I
23 can't get that. You always hear stuff like that.
24 The general joke across the island is if
25 you don't have the part, it's out in the warehouse.

1 They put it on surplus and they set it out there so it
2 would be sold under their sale. That's the general
3 joke. Equipment, I don't know. I don't see us work
4 on any more stuff. We do PMs on electrical side of
5 the house and I don't see it getting worse overall.
6 MR. FERDAS: Do you have an example of the
7 service water from the mechanics?
8 [redacted] I just heard them talking
9 about it the other night. I don't recall. It was the
10 guys over in the Hope Creek shop talking. They were
11 bitching to their supervisor about a couple of things
12 needing to be done out there or something.
13 MR. FERDAS: -- screens.
14 [redacted] Yes, that's what it was
15 because they had to go down inside the -- screens
16 because they had a problem with one of them. It was
17 a safety concern. That's how I got involved in it.
18 They were concerned about going down inside the --
19 screens when they have this methane gas problem and
20 the fact that we have to make sure the fire department
21 is out there sniffing and stuff like that. They got
22 into it a little bit about that. That's what it was.
23 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Do you have any
24 knowledge of people speaking to NRC or INPO or
25 something like that and management wanting to debrief

1 them after they have had those contacts?

2 [redacted]: Management asks us and

3 usually always asks us to tell them what an INPO guy

4 says to you when they come on site. They don't make

5 it mandatory. They would appreciate it. If they ask

6 you questions while you are on the job, come back and

7 tell your supervisor so we can address the issues.

8 That's pretty much been the norm.

9 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: How about with

10 NRC? Would it be the same thing?

11 [redacted] I've never heard that. I'm

12 trying to think of a situation with NRC. Yes, I would

13 probably say it would be the same thing. I do know

14 one situation where -- Yes, I think so. The NRC isn't

15 out there that much talking though.

16 I remember a situation where NRC was

17 concerned about place keeping marks in a --(Tape

18 flip.) This was years ago though. It's nothing

19 recent. I remember the guy saying well it's the same

20 thing I use on procedure. The NRC guy said you should

21 have four. You should have one for each.

22 I remember him going back and telling his

23 supervisor because he thought that's what he should

24 do. If you get questioned, tell us so we can correct

25 it. So I would say yes. If anybody questions you,

1 come on back. I think that's pretty much the norm,
2 especially with all the INPO guys that we have here
3 that come here periodically.
4 They want to know. They tell you before
5 INPO comes here we would appreciate you coming back
6 and telling us. What are they talking about? What
7 are their questions? They don't put on an air that
8 they are trying to cover up or anything.
9 They tell you right out we want to know so
10 when we get debriefed by INPO we know the situation.
11 That's what they tell you because every day at the end
12 of the day INPO has their little debriefing thing or
13 whatever they call it. So we know the situation so we
14 can explain why this guy did that or did that.
15 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: What else along
16 the lines of safety culture issues? What are we
17 missing asking about? Are there other issues that we
18 should be concerned about? Do you know anybody that
19 would have information on this that would be
20 beneficial as far as things not working right?
21 [redacted] The guy who is following me
22 up is the guy who is going to tell you everything you
23 need to know about safety on this island, [redacted]
24 [redacted] He is our [redacted] who
25 has been doing it for a couple of years.

1 Anything you want to know, he will have
2 your complaints. He'll tell you what the problems are
3 more than I can. He'll tell you what he thinks is
4 effective and ineffective. But overall safety-wise,
5 I think we're a lot better than we were.
6 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Mark, do you have
7 anything else?
8 MR. FERDAS: No.
9 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: I'll just put the
10 closing blurb on here and we'll be done. [redacted]
11 [redacted] have I or any other NRC representative
12 threatened you in any manner or offered you any
13 rewards in return for this information?
14 [redacted] No.
15 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Have you provided
16 this information freely and voluntarily?
17 [redacted] Yes.
18 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: Is there anything
19 else you would want to add to the record at this time?
20 [redacted] No.
21 SPECIAL AGENT ANDERSON: The time is now
22 5:25 p.m. and the interview is concluded.
23 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
24 concluded at 5:25 p.m.)
25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceedings before the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission in the matter of:

Name of Proceeding: Interview of [redacted])

Docket Number: 1-2003-051F

Location: Hancock's Bridge, NJ

were held as herein appears, and that this is the original transcript thereof for the file of the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission taken by me and, thereafter reduced to typewriting by me or under the direction of the court reporting company, and that the transcript is a true and accurate record of the foregoing proceedings as recorded on tape(s) provided by the NRC.

Anne Marie Smith

Anne Marie Smith
Official Transcriber
Neal R. Gross & Co., Inc.