

Ted Wingfield notes/comments on the [redacted] interview (12-02-03) 4C

The following are my observations/questions of the [redacted] interview held on 12-02-03.

ASSESSMENT QUESTION	YES/NO	AMPLIFICATION (WHY, WHY NOT, ETC.)
Will raise concerns and has done so before?	YES	Also N/A (No longer employed with PSEG)
Raises concerns for others?	YES	Did raise concerns
Believes others raise concerns without hesitation?	NO	Due to lingering affects from [redacted]'s yelling, etc.
Knows of someone who has experienced retaliation for raising concerns?	YES	But, could remember the specifics (documented in a notification (pg. 109)

- Page 4 through 6 - Concerns about the work environment began in the 1997/1998 time frame when "basically the entire senior leadership team of the site" was changed out ... previously challenging/questioning of operations and the rest of plant personnel centered around "safety and how to run a power station [and] were consistent with the way I was trained in the Navy and at [another nuclear utility] ... after this management change-out, the questions were more along the lines of production pretty much at all costs ... 'What can we do?' 'Is there a way around this requirement?' ... consistent ... shocking"
- Page 8 - Micro-management culture developed ... "minuscule operational decisions being made at the highest level of the company ... decisions were questioned all the way down the chain as to whether there were requirements or not"
- Page 9 through 12 - Recounts an incident (~2000 time frame) where there was a complete loss of station air during scheduled maintenance. Temporary backup diesel air compressors were placed in service but only maintained the air header pressure at ~89# which very near the ~85# or ~87# level requiring a manual reactor trip per Abnormal Operating procedures. The 1st diesel compressor was shut down in an attempt to refuel it but the header pressure degraded too quickly. The decision was made (before the management team was consulted) to refuel the compressors while running with the Fire Company standing by as a precaution.
- Page 14 through 27 [redacted] berates the TARP team leader ("I can't believe you're even thinking about shutting down the unit. You just need to be getting some \$&%!# air compressors in here, and keep the units on line") in front of the rest of the TARP team ... "He lit off on me like a Roman candle ... didn't change my course of action ... when he came out in the hallway, I said ... I'm going to run this the way, as a nuclear professional I've been trained to run [it] ... or you can get somebody else to do it" ... **{REVIEWER COMMENT - As a former SRO (6 months removed from a different Region I site), an episode like this (coupled with the long and steady history of "arbitrary/political" firings) is enough to generate, in my opinion, a chilled environment against taking a "conservative" approach to any operational decision because this tirade came directly from the [redacted] ... essentially - no one is going to want to risk being the next guy to "get reamed"}** 7C
- Page 27 through 43 - Salem startup in progress with generator complications causing delays greater than a week ... Site management directs pursuit of bringing the plant up as far as possible to make up for the lost time ... vacuum was established and the plant was heated up to about 100# with the turbine & generator uncoupled and using a special substance to seal the turbine glands ... senior management [redacted] was pushing to perform reactor power physics testing (potentially directed from [redacted]) ... in arguing for the conservative approach "I erased his [redacted] whiteboard and [said] 'let me work from the augmented inspection team backwards' ... going to remove decay heat from the plant ... with two systems [in manual] not in the normal configuration ... because [someone doesn't] control the system right, you cool down a little bit ... [cause] the reactor to go more critical ... or super critical ... go up into the power range and have a reactivity event ... talked about verbally to me at my appraisal ... that stand for safety cost me in my career at PSEG"
- Page 44 through 47 - Multiple partial losses of Off-Site Power (~2000/2001) ... on one of them the shift manager took conservative action to manually trip one of the units based on plant Circ Water system response ... he was second-guessed about the decision ... after the third instance of partial losses of Off-Site Power ... it was determined that the lightning arresters in the switch yard needed to be replaced

Information in this record was deleted
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Act, exemptions 7C
FOIA- 2605-0194

R-152

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- Page 48 through 56 - Reactor Feed Pump turbine Inlet valve steam leak ... "Big steam leak. Going to have to shut the unit down. You need to come in ... got into the plant and was told ... everything's fine. We got the valve shut ... lagging blown all the way across the turbine building ... I've seen steam leaks that scared me that threw a lot less stuff around ... 20 [to] 30 ft. steam plume ... never a TARP report ... TARP didn't exist ... operators had said that the decision was made to shut the unit down ... shift manager making preparations to shut the unit down ... [REDACTED] went to talk to the vice president ... [REDACTED] climbed the ladder and shut the valve [while the NEOs had said they would not shut it because they view it as unsafe/life-threatening ... the response I got [after confronting the [REDACTED]] was totally unacceptable. It was ... 'so what' ..." Site guidance dictates that management individuals are not supposed to operate equipment ... "in an emergency, it's allowable, but the way this unfolded, it really wasn't like an emergency"
- Page 57 through 62 - Discusses meteorological tower loss of power design change package (DCP) informality in the summer of 2002. Met tower lost power due to an excavation error ... station management directed the establishment of a temporary power source without following the "temporary modification" process to avoid the requirement to submit a report to the NRC if power was lost for more than 8 hours ... the conscious decision was made to do "the paperwork" as a follow-up action once power was restored
- Page 63 through 65 - "It seemed like the shift managers were being second guessed on every Tech. Spec. call or every operational decision that they were making ... by the senior management ... they [Salem Shift Managers] were going to meet off-site to make sure they were in alignment on what they would do under certain circumstances when demanded to do things by senior management ... It was [REDACTED] operating the power station from their offices, and the shift happened to try to put every ounce of their being to posing the questions ... what if ... we really can't do that"
- Page 67 through 69 - Licensed operator re-qualification training hours cut by 1/3 (~90hrs to <60hrs).
- Page 77 through 82 - Startup after a failed pressurizer spray valve & subsequent reactor trip was directed without understanding the cause of the trip ... "Typically, the understanding of that whole thing would have occurred before the plant would start up ... [REDACTED] was applying significant pressure to get the unit started back up, and later admitted to the fact that he started the reactor up with really no understanding of what occurred at the event ... then a whole bunch of new learnings came out the next week after the root cause was done" ... the premature startup may not be documented in a notification
- Page 83 through 85 - "... any event that occurred in the plant ... 20/20 hindsight ... take your best shot at doing the right thing, but if it wasn't exactly what [REDACTED] wanted ... very abrupt and scream and yell ... berate individuals ... in front of the management team ... particularly harsh ... would that have affected me in raising a concern? No, but could it have affected somebody else? Yes ... If you ... kept your head down, you got less of a chance of getting your head knocked off ... any viewpoint ... a different viewpoint especially"
- Page 85 - "... this guy's got a lot of years as a senior reactor operator, and he just flat out wasn't listened to"
- Page 97 & 98 - [REDACTED] exerted pressure on the site QA Manager to revise the QA issue reporting system to remove grading or the "sugar coat" the grading to remove the negative implications of poor performance
- Page 106 - "... I graduated top of my class in mechanical engineering. I have a [REDACTED] ... Do I feel that I was heard by my management team at the end? ABSOLUTELY NOT. They could care less what opinion I had on nuclear power and nuclear safety"