

Current Status

Most recent NRC inspection of SCWE at Salem/Hope Creek was completed onsite from June 12 to 21, 2006 by a six person team. A representative of the State of New Jersey's Bureau of Nuclear Engineering observed the inspection. Exit meeting was held on June 29, 2006. Bottom line conclusion was that there have been substantial improvements made in the SCWE area at Salem and Hope Creek, and that these improvements are sustainable. Tentatively, the inspection report will be issued by the end of July 2006.

These inspection results will be considered, along with other inspection results and observations, in the mid-cycle assessment of Salem and Hope Creek performance in early August 2006 (8/8/06). During this assessment, the staff will consider the status of the substantive cross-cutting issue in SCWE, based on all inputs, and whether to continue and/or modify the enhanced NRC oversight of SCWE at Salem/Hope Creek. [Preliminarily, it is anticipated that the staff will recommend that the SCWE substantive cross-cutting issue be closed and that there will be no need for renewal of the Deviation Memo for further enhanced oversight of SCWE.] The results of the mid-cycle assessment will be issued in early September 2006.

[The following time line is provided for additional background, if needed.]

Background/Time line

- 1/28/2004 RI letter to PSEG w/interim results of a special review of Salem/Hope Creek SCWE initiated in Fall 2003. Review accumulated information about a number of events which, to varying degrees, called into question PSEG management's openness to concerns and alternative views, strength of communications, and effectiveness of the stations' corrective action and feedback processes.
- 3/21/04 PSEG provided results of three safety culture assessments conducted at the site. These assessments identified the need for improvement of the work environment and equipment reliability and that better implementation of station processes, such as corrective actions and work management, were important to achieving equipment improvements.
- 6/30/04 RI issued letter to PSEG providing the final results of the special review. Specifically, the NRC did not identify any serious safety violations; but did agency concluded that there were numerous indications of weaknesses in corrective actions and management efforts to establish a SCWE. PSEG's self-assessments were in general agreement w/the NRC review results.
- 8/23/04 EDO approves a Deviation from the NRC's Action Matrix to provide enhanced oversight for Salem/Hope Creek than would typically be called for by the ROP Action Matrix. The Deviation Memo provided for a number of additional oversight activities, including management meetings with PSEG, an oversight coordination team, and additional inspections.
- 7/29/05 Deviation Memorandum renewed.

- 9/2005 Special NRC team inspection of SCWE completed. Team concluded that PSEG had made progress in addressing work environment problems, but noted issues that required additional action and focused attention, including efforts to evaluate and resolve negative perceptions of the work environment in certain work groups.
- 1/2006 PSEG administers a safety culture survey by Synergy Consulting Services Corporation. The survey results indicate improvement in nearly all cultural metrics compared to the results of the prior Synergy survey in 2005. The survey also revealed that the rate of improvement was strong; PSEG offered that this provided a sound foundation for sustainable improvement.
- 3/2006 PSEG concluded that efforts to improve the work environment were substantial and sustainable, and subsequently commissioned an independent peer assessment of SCWE. The peer assessment team, which included several members with extensive management, regulatory, and SCWE-related experience, also concluded that substantial and sustainable progress had been made in the work environment at both facilities.
- 5/4/06 PSEG notified NRC by letter that they were prepared for an NRC review to confirm these conclusions.
- 6/21/06 NRC completed a follow up SCWE team inspection. The results of this inspection determined that progress is substantial and processes are in place for sustaining these improvements.