

Official Transcript of Proceedings  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Title: Interview of Chris Younie

Docket Number: 4-2006-035

Location:  
Fulton, Missouri

Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2006

Work Order No.: NRC-1313

Pages 1-64

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

INTERVIEW

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INTERVIEW OF :  
CHRIS YOUNIE : CASE NO. 04-2006-35

(CLOSED) :

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Wednesday, November 1, 2006  
Callaway Nuclear Plant  
Fulton, Missouri

The above-entitled interview was conducted at 1:00 P.M.

BEFORE:

Special Agent, STEVE ROMERO

FOR THE CALLAWAY NUCLEAR PLANT:

PILLSBURY, WINTHROP, SHAW, PITTMAN, LLP  
2300 N. Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037  
202-663-8000

By: Mr. J. Patrick Hickey

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

2 MR. ROMERO: Okay. We're on the record.  
3 For the record, this is an interview of Mr. Chris  
4 middle initial R, last name Younie.

5 MR. YOUNIE: That's correct. Younie.

6 MR. ROMERO: Younie.

7 MR. YOUNIE: Younie.

8 MR. ROMERO: Mr. Younie, could you  
9 please -- the date is approximately November 1st, 2006,  
10 and the time is approximately 2:37 p.m. Mr. Younie,  
11 could you please state and spell your full name for the  
12 record?

13 MR. YOUNIE: My name is Chris R. Richard  
14 Younie, Y-o-u-n-i-e.

15 MR. ROMERO: And what is your current  
16 job title?

17 MR. YOUNIE: I'm the manager of business  
18 operations.

19 MR. ROMERO: Okay. Present at this  
20 interview are Special Agent Steve Romero from the  
21 Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Office of  
22 Investigation, Region 4, Arlington, Texas; Mr. Younie,  
23 who is being interviewed; and Mr. Patrick Henry.

24 MR. HICKEY: Hickey.

25 MR. ROMERO: Patrick Hickey, who is the

1 legal counsel here that's representing him and the  
2 Callaway Plant; Ms. Lisa Banks is the court reporter.

3 This interview is being tape recorded  
4 and will be transcribed by Lisa Banks and/or Neal Gross  
5 and Associates. The purpose of this interview is to  
6 ascertain facts concerning an allegation regarding  
7 discrimination against a control room shift supervisor  
8 for raising safety concerns. Mr. Younie, could you  
9 please stand and raise your right hand?

10 (Witness sworn.)

11 MR. ROMERO: Does your employer require  
12 you to have an attorney present when you talk to the  
13 NRC?

14 MR. YOUNIE: It's not required but asked  
15 for.

16 MR. ROMERO: Okay. In other words, they  
17 give you the option of having one?

18 MR. YOUNIE: That's correct.

19 MR. ROMERO: Is Mr. Hickey acting as  
20 your personal representative today?

21 MR. YOUNIE: Yes. He is.

22 MR. ROMERO: Okay. Did you select him  
23 or did the company select him for you?

24 MR. YOUNIE: He was selected.

25 MR. ROMERO: The company offered him and

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1 you agreed --

2 MR. YOUNIE: That's correct.

3 MR. ROMERO: -- to take him? Okay. All  
4 right. These questions are for you, Mr. Hickey. Who  
5 is your employer?

6 MR. HICKEY: Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw  
7 Pittman. I am counsel for Mr. Younie. I also  
8 represent AmerenUE and other witnesses in this  
9 proceeding.

10 MR. ROMERO: Okay. Do you believe that  
11 a potential conflict may arise during the course of  
12 this interview?

13 MR. HICKEY: I do not. If that were to  
14 happen, I would address that with Mr. Younie and we'd  
15 resolve it appropriately.

16 MR.ROMERO: Okay. Mr. Younie, do you  
17 understand that Mr. Hickey represents other parties  
18 associated with this investigation and he primarily  
19 represents Callaway?

20 MR. YOUNIE: Yes. I do.

21 MR. ROMERO: Okay. With that  
22 understanding, do you still want Mr. Hickey as your  
23 representative here today?

24 MR. YOUNIE: Yes.

25 MR. ROMERO: Okay. All right.

1 DIRECT EXAMINATION BY MR. ROMERO:

2 Q. Mr. Younie, what is your educational  
3 background for the record?

4 A. In what regards? I've --

5 Q. Do you have a college degree?

6 A. I do not have a college degree. I've  
7 got a junior status in college.

8 Q. Okay. Have you received training  
9 subsequent to that here at Callaway pertaining to your  
10 field?

11 A. Nothing specific here. I've worked in  
12 the nuclear industry for 25 years. Twenty-three of  
13 those years were at the Wolf Creek Nuclear Power Plant,  
14 where I went through and received my senior reactor  
15 operator's license. And then I transferred to -- or  
16 the Ameren -- came to the Ameren two years ago,  
17 November 8th, of 2005. So it's been just about right  
18 at two years.

19 Q. Okay. So you've been here as far -- as  
20 employment background, you've been here two years at  
21 Callaway. Correct?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. And prior to that you were at Wolf Creek  
24 Nuclear --

25 A. That's correct.

1 Q. -- Power Plant. Okay. How long were  
2 you there at Wolf Creek?

3 A. Twenty-three years.

4 Q. Twenty-three years. Okay. All right.

5 Mr. Younie, did you ever receive an allegation from one  
6 of your managers, (b)(7C)c or any  
7 other manager concerning an allegation that Mr. [redacted]

8 (b)(7C)c made concerning another reactor -- another  
9 shift supervisor by the name of (b)(7C)c being  
10 inattentive or struggling to stay awake in the control  
11 room? ~~X~~

12 A. What do you mean as far as receiving the  
13 allegation?

14 Q. Did someone give you that information?  
15 Did somebody provide it to you?

16 A. I didn't receive that information until  
17 I was aware that I was going to be interviewed by the  
18 OI.

19 Q. Okay. So you never received that  
20 information?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Okay. That's fine. Mr. [redacted] never  
23 spoke to you about that or brought it up to you?

24 A. Mr. [redacted] just mentioned the fact that  
25 there was going to be an investigation and that I may

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1 be involved in the interview process.

2 Q. An investigation into what? Did he tell  
3 you what the investigation was?

4 A. Just that there was concerns of  
5 retaliation against Mr. (b)(7C)c for making a claim to  
6 Employee Concerns. He didn't go into specifics as far  
7 as what the claim was.

8 Q. And when were you told this information?

9 A. I don't recall the exact date. It's  
10 been --

11 Q. Approximately. A month or year.

12 A. March time frame.

13 Q. March 2006?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Okay. And that's the most you  
16 received --

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. -- as far as information? Okay. You  
19 were not in any way part of any type of rating  
20 Mr. (b)(7C)c or --

21 A. Not specifically for Mr. (b)(7C)c No.

22 Q. Okay. And for the record, sir, can you  
23 tell me how your position relates to Mr. [redacted]  
24 Mr. [redacted] or Mr. (b)(7C)c What's your position? Are  
25 you a supervisor of Mr. [redacted] and --

1 A. Currently, I'm not the supervisor of  
2 Mr. [REDACTED]

3 Q. I know earlier we spoke. You said that  
4 up until January of 2006 you were.

5 A. That's correct.

6 Q. Right? And in relationship as far as  
7 management, how does that relate to Mr. [REDACTED] and  
8 Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. (b)(7C)c

9 A. From 2005 -- November 2005 to January  
10 2006, I was the manager of operations. And as that, I  
11 had (b)(7C)c who is the (b)(7C)c  
12 (b)(7C)c reporting to me.

13 Q. Okay. All right, sir. Sir, did you  
14 have anything to do with evaluating Mr. (b)(7C)c for  
15 the 2000 year evaluation period?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. As far as bonus payouts, like the  
18 KPI bonus payout, sir, were you ever involved with that  
19 as far as in your position here at Callaway?

20 A. I was involved in that as far as how it  
21 was going to be applied to the site employees.

22 Q. And how was that determined to be, sir,  
23 as far as the payout?

24 A. The payout discussion started as a  
25 management discussion. We proposed that to the senior

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1 team. And the senior team came back with a  
2 counterproposal as far as what the percentages were  
3 going to be, and a management team executed their  
4 expectations as far as percentages.

5 Q. Did Mr. [REDACTED] ever bring up  
6 Mr. (b)(7C)c as far as asking you specifically on how  
7 to rate an individual by the name of -- how to rate  
8 Mr. (b)(7C)c as far as where he should rate him on his  
9 evaluation?

10 A. That was done as part of group feedback.  
11 We had Mr. (b)(7C)c peers and a team of managers were  
12 in a room where we ranked all of the management on site  
13 and gave Mr. [REDACTED] feedback specifically on the  
14 performance of all of his shift managers. And in that  
15 nature, he did get feedback from myself and the rest of  
16 his peers as far as what his performance should be.

17 Q. Do you recall what you stated at that  
18 time about Mr. (b)(7C)c [REDACTED]

19 A. I really didn't have any comments as far  
20 as Mr. (b)(7C)c performance at that time. Most of it  
21 came from other peers in the room, and I can't remember  
22 who the individuals were that gave that feedback.

23 Q. But you didn't --

24 A. No.

25 Q. -- you didn't give specific feedback on

1 that?

2 A. No. No.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. But I was part of a process that did  
5 provide that feedback.

6 Q. Okay. You were part of the process.

7 A. Okay.

8 Q. I'm sorry, sir. I --

9 A. I understand. But as part of that  
10 process I did not give any specific feedback on  
11 Mr. (b)(7C)c performance.

12 Q. Okay. And you don't recall who the  
13 other managers were --

14 A. No. I do not.

15 Q. -- there that did provide that feedback?

16 A. No. I do not.

17 Q. Okay. You don't recall if Mr. [REDACTED]  
18 had stated, "I have an employee that I'm rating as  
19 meets expectation, but he's having trouble, you know,  
20 in certain areas"?

21 A. He did that with all his rankings.  
22 He -- when the people brought their rankings in,  
23 everybody was ranked fairly high. They ranked them as  
24 far as where they thought their performance was at  
25 based on feedback from peers in the room. There was

1 recommendations from folks in the room that  
2 Mr. (b)(7C)c and I believe it was two other [redacted]  
3 (b)(7C)c be given -- or provided feedback that their  
4 performance was in the area of needs expectations.

5 Q. Meets expectations?

6 A. Need -- or (b)(7C)c Excuse  
7 me.

8 Q. (b)(7C)c

9 A. Excuse me. Yeah. (b)(7C)c

10 Q. And were there any reasons given to why?

11 A. I can't remember the specifics on it.

12 It's been too long.

13 Q. Was there any type of minutes taken of  
14 this meeting?

15 A. There were comments captured. I believe  
16 Dan Regelean was there, along with Betsy Fenningan.

17 They captured the comments from the peers and provided  
18 that information back to Mr. [redacted] so he could provide  
19 that feedback to Mr. (b)(7C)c

20 Q. Is there any way I can get a copy of  
21 that, sir?

22 A. I'd have to see if Mr. [redacted] has it.

23 MR. HICKEY: I think I can get it for  
24 you.

25 MR. ROMERO: I appreciate that. I

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1 need -- I'd like to see that.

2 BY MR. ROMERO:

3 Q. All right, sir. Let's talk about the  
4 KPI bonus. Can you tell us for the record, sir, how  
5 does this work for a manager? How do they receive  
6 their bonus and how are they rated?

7 A. Okay. There's two components. We  
8 identify performance parameters that we want to operate  
9 the plant to, and we have payout to those. It's driven  
10 on safety behaviors, how the plant performs as far as  
11 output -- you know, we want to keep the plant online --  
12 outage durations, things like that. So we put a dollar  
13 amount to that performance.

14 And I believe there's -- that's a 50  
15 percent payout. Fifty percent of the potential bonus  
16 goes to that. And then, the other part of it is tied  
17 to individual goals. And the manager makes a decision  
18 on how the individual is performing to those goals as  
19 far as what the payout is to those performance  
20 indicators.

21 Q. So, sir, if a person -- if a manager  
22 received an overall rating of needs improvement, would  
23 they receive a bonus?

24 A. In this last year, no.

25 Q. They would not have received any at all?

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1 A. No.

2 Q. Okay. Prior to that, they were  
3 receiving the bonus?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Why was there a change in that?

6 A. Because as part of the recalibration --  
7 let me step back a little bit here. We had a large  
8 number of people that were in the meets or exceeds  
9 expectation in performance in the performance appraisal  
10 process, yet we had Callaway Plant down here  
11 (indicating) as far as one of the lowest performers in  
12 the industry. Okay. So we didn't have alignment  
13 between how people were performing to the plant  
14 performance.

15 So we went through this recalibration  
16 process to give people candid feedback, initially with  
17 no repercussion. It was going to be just feedback as  
18 far as where their performance was at and get that more  
19 realigned realistically with what their contribution  
20 was to plant performance. Okay. And that's -- that  
21 was the exercise we went through with our management  
22 team.

23 Q. And that took place this year?

24 A. It was January 2005 -- or 2006. That's  
25 correct.

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1 Q. Okay. So you did a realignment and  
2 there were going to be no repercussions?

3 A. That's correct.

4 Q. And what do you define as "no  
5 repercussions"?

6 A. There -- it was -- there was no  
7 financial -- it wasn't going to be financially punitive  
8 to get a needs improvement. It was until after that  
9 discussion that the management team was challenged, and  
10 then the discussion evolved to where there would not be  
11 compensation for people -- or to people that got the  
12 needs improvement.

13 Q. So there were repercussions?

14 A. After the discussions on performance,  
15 yes.

16 Q. Okay. So those initial discussions  
17 would've been January 2006. And then, when did the  
18 subsequent -- the other discussions come up to where  
19 they decided there would be repercussions?

20 A. It took us probably three to four weeks  
21 to go through the evaluation process. So it was  
22 probably in the February time frame, mid-February time  
23 frame.

24 Q. So then they decided there were  
25 repercussions?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Okay. So an -- just for the record,  
3 sir, so an employee -- a manager that would've received  
4 a needs -- an overall rating of needs to improve would  
5 not have received the -- a bonus?

6 A. That's correct.

7 Q. Okay. As far as you know, sir -- and I  
8 know that you don't supervise -- I'm putting this on  
9 the record. I know you don't directly supervise  
10 Mr. (b)(7C)c

11 A. That's correct.

12 Q. That's for the record. But I'm still  
13 asking you this question is what -- do you know if  
14 Mr. (b)(7C)c received any adverse action or any  
15 repercussions because he did bring up the allegation  
16 that was another shift supervisor that was inattentive  
17 in the control room by the name of (b)(7C)c

18 A. Not that I'm aware of.

19 Q. And you're not aware of it because  
20 nobody brought it to your attention?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Mr. Younie, do you have anything further  
23 you'd like to add?

24 A. I can't think of anything. If you need  
25 any other questions answered, let me know.

1 Q. Okay. We've already established on the  
2 record that you're not his direct supervisor. When the  
3 ratings were given, you weren't even his chain of  
4 command.

5 A. That's correct.

6 Q. Right? You left that last assignment,  
7 which you were in his chain of command, in January  
8 2006. Correct?

9 A. That's correct. January 1st.

10 Q. The ratings were given out when  
11 approximately? March or -- 2006.

12 A. Probably first of March.

13 Q. Okay. First of March 2006. So you  
14 wouldn't have been part of that process?

15 A. I was not part of that process.

16 Q. Okay. The only process you were -- were  
17 when you were in that meeting that you got -- you had  
18 that all the managers were brought in. Correct?

19 A. That's correct.

20 Q. And you as part of the team -- part of  
21 the management gave feedback to Mr. [REDACTED] and others.  
22 Correct?

23 A. That's correct.

24 Q. And Mr. (b)(7C)c was one of the  
25 individuals that was mentioned?

1 A. He was brought --

2 Q. Right?

3 A. -- up in the discussion. Yes.

4 Q. But you don't recall making any  
5 specific --

6 A. No.

7 Q. -- comments about him?

8 A. No.

9 Q. All right, sir. Mr. Younie, have I or  
10 any NRC representative threatened you in any way or  
11 offered you any reward in return for the statement  
12 you've given today?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay. Have you given this statement  
15 freely and voluntarily?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. All right. This interview is concluded  
18 on November 1st, 2006. And the time is 2:55 p.m.  
19 Thank you, sir.

20 A. Okay. All right.

21 Q. I appreciate it.

22 A. Thank you, sir.

23 (WHEREIN; the interview was concluded at  
24 2:55 p.m.)

25