TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE 37902

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JUL 13 1990

Chairman Kenneth M. Carr
Commissioner Kenneth C. Rogers
Commissioner James R. Curtiss
Commissioner Forrest J. Remick
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Chairman Carr and Commissioners:

As a result of a recent report by TVA's Office of the Inspector General raising certain questions about TVA's handling of differing views expressed by employees in TVA's Nuclear Power Program, the TVA Board asked its advisor, Warren R. Cobean, Jr., to conduct an expedited review of TVA's current practices and procedures in this area. The Board specifically selected Mr. Cobean because of his extensive experience in the nuclear Navy and in private industry. Mr. Cobean was assisted by Leslie D. Kelly, Jr., and John H. Nicholson, both of whom also have extensive experience in nuclear power and industry management. Mr. Cobean has now submitted his report, and the TVA Board members have individually met with him and have accepted his recommendations. We have also requested our staff to promptly formulate specific actions to implement each of the recommendations.

Because of the significance of the report, both to TVA and the NRC, the TVA Board wanted to promptly bring it to the attention of the Commission. TVA is, of course, committed to ensuring that TVA employees may freely express concerns without fear of retaliation. We believe the actions recommended by Mr. Cobean will complement and enhance the extensive actions which have already been initiated for this purpose by TVA's Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power, Oliver Kingsley. You may be sure that Director Waters and I will be closely following implementation of Mr. Cobean's recommendations, and that TVA will inform the Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff of the actions which result from those recommendations.

Best Regards,

Marvin Runyon
Chairman

Enclosure
cc: See page 2

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Chairman Carr and Commissioners

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cc (Enclosure):
Mr. James M. Taylor
Executive Director for Operations
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Mr. Hugh L. Thompson, Jr.
Deputy Executive Director for
Nuclear Materials Safety, Safeguards,
and Operations Support
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Mr. Stewart D. Ebneter
Administrator, Region II
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Room 2900, 101 Marietta Street, NW.
Atlanta, Georgia 30323

Dr. Thomas E. Murley
Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor
Regulation
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Mr. Ben B. Hayes
Director, Office of Investigations
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Mr. James Lieberman
Director, Office of Enforcement
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

Mr. Samuel J. Chilk
Secretary
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

TVA 64 (OS-9-65) (OP-WP-5-85)

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY

TO : Marvin Runyon, Chairman, ET 12A 7A-K
J. B. Waters, Director, ET 12A 9A-K

FROM : W. R. Cobean, Jr., Advisor to the Board, LP 6N 38A-C

DATE : JUL 09 1990

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF TVA'S CURRENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH DIFFERING VIEWS EXPRESSED BY EMPLOYEES IN TVA'S NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM

In accordance with your memorandum of May 22, 1990, I have conducted the subject review. I was assisted by Leslie D. Kelly, Jr., and John H. Nicholson, both of whom have extensive experience in nuclear power and industry management outside of TVA. This team interviewed and had discussions with 60 people at least once.

Your memorandum asked that we (1) review TVA's current practices and procedures for dealing with differing views expressed by employees in TVA's nuclear power system. It is our view that the administrative practices and procedures are adequate. However, we believe that training of managers in leadership, managing conflict, and human interaction could further improve performance. This is further discussed in the attachments. There is general understanding of the TVA policy as expressed in CODE II EXPRESSION OF STAFF VIEWS as reported in two recent audits of the Employee Concern Program (ECP) by the Office of Inspector General (IG) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). However, in practice we consider that there is uneven and untimely resolution, including feedback of responses to conflicts between supervisors and the supervised. This is further discussed in the attachments.

Your memorandum further asked us (2) to assess whether TVA's policies and other efforts (including communication of its policies) to resolve this type of issue are adequate and sufficient to fully meet TVA's responsibilities. It is our view that TVA's policies are adequate, but we think that other efforts (including communication of its policies) to resolve this type of issue are not adequate and require improvement.

We found that significant progress has been made in the recent past. The IG determined that the elapsed time for handling employee concerns was cut in half during 1989. The NRC determined that the personnel at Watts Bar were well aware of the ECP; would generally take their safety concerns to their first line supervisor and were confident they would be resolved by their supervisor; and would use the ECP if the issues could not be satisfactorily resolved through their management and were aware of their right to take their concerns to the NRC. However, we think that the efforts to resolve employee concern issues can, and should be, improved and should include elimination of "reverse intimidation" currently being experienced at some sites, i.e., managers must be able to insist on accountability and productivity while resolving differing views of employees. Our conclusions and recommendations are in the attachments.

Marvin Runyon
J. B. Waters

JUL 09 1990

REVIEW OF TVA'S CURRENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH DIFFERING VIEWS EXPRESSED BY EMPLOYEES IN TVA'S NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM

Your memorandum asked us (3) to review TVA's CODE II EXPRESSION OF STAFF VIEWS in order to offer suggestions, including any changes that might be appropriate. We note this policy is under review now. We believe the policy should be restructured so as to reemphasize that TVA looks to the supervisor and the employee to resolve conflicts by open discussion as the principle, and first, attempt at resolution. This could be accomplished by moving the paragraphs under "TVA Employees" to the first paragraph under "Policy". It should be noted, as written in TVA's CODE II EXPRESSION OF STAFF VIEWS, employees could expect that the Board of Directors would specifically act in session upon views expressed by employees that have not been resolved by line management up to, and including, the Chief Operating Officer to the satisfaction of the employees. Normally such issues could be resolved by obtaining advice from line management. In some cases the Board may choose to obtain advice from others.

Your memorandum asked us (4) to address any additional corrective actions which we believe should be considered to improve TVA performance in this area. We believe that other actions are fundamental to the solution of the subject problem. Instability and lack of trust of management by many employees are two of the basic causes of most all categories of employee concerns. We have attached some suggestions for consideration. These suggestions may be duplicative of actions already initiated by Nuclear Power or other TVA organizations as we made no attempt to investigate what was in the pipeline of change. We believe that some of these suggestions have a time urgency element as they will quickly contribute to a more stable environment in TVA's Nuclear Power organization. Stability and teambuilding are the two major environmental changes needed not only to eliminate problems associated with differing views but to develop a happier, more productive, environment in which to work--one in which employees participate more fully in achieving goals and are treated with more dignity and respect and where there is a total commitment to quality by every employee.

Warren R Cobean

WRC:CLB
Attachments

ATTACHMENTS

A. HANDLING EMPLOYEE CONCERNS/DIFFERING VIEWS

B. STABILITY

C. TEAMBUILDING

D. TRAINING

E. PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ATTACHMENT A
HANDLING EMPLOYEE CONCERNS/DIFFERING VIEWS

It is clear from our review of the NRC and Office of Inspector General (IG) reports, and employee interviews and our tours of the plants that significant improvements have been achieved in dealing with differing views expressed by employees in TVA's Nuclear Program. The IG determined that the elapsed time for handling employee concerns was cut in half during 1989. The conclusions were well documented and communicated to the concerned employees. At Watts Bar, the site with the most employee concern problems, the NRC found in its inspection in January 1990 that personnel were well aware of the Employee Concern Program (ECP), would generally take their safety concerns to their first-line supervisors and were confident they would be resolved by the supervisor, would use the ECP if the issues could not be satisfactorily resolved through their management and were aware of their right to take their concerns to the NRC. However, we believe that the average time for handling employee concerns of three months is far too long and should be greatly reduced. We understand that the target goals for fiscal year 1990 is 45 days. Every effort should be made to achieve this goal.

Furthermore, we believe that the case referred to in your letter of May 22, 1990, is just one of several cases where, due to past problems, a large number of grievances, employee concerns, EEO problems and Department of Labor (DOL) cases have resulted. A program for identifying potentially serious issues to the Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power, has recently been instituted. This has improved the visibility of problems. Pending DOL cases should be carefully and quickly reexamined by TVA with the aim of achieving a settlement where appropriate in order to avoid protracted legal procedures. The best legal talent should be utilized. Similarly, known potential problems which have not yet become DOL cases but have high probability of becoming so should be readdressed in a similar manner and decisions made on how they should be settled or resolved. Such actions would send a message that TVA is being fair to employees.

Even more important than solving current and past problems of this type is the need to take actions to reduce the number and seriousness of future problems. This will necessitate establishment of a stable environment, clarification of roles and goals, and the improvement of training of all managers in leadership principles and practices as discussed in more detail in Attachments B and C. Additionally, other actions specifically related to handling employee concerns should be taken as described below.

Currently on the basis of many interviews we perceive that many managers are not requesting expert assistance such as Human Resources, Office of General Counsel (OGC), IG, and ECP personnel in order to help them to resolve differing views and reduce employee concerns in a timely manner. The reasons for this are twofold: First, some managers have not been adequately trained in the seriousness of these types of problems and the value of requesting expert assistance. Second, support by Human Resources is inadequate at some sites both in quality and in timeliness.

Managers should be thoroughly trained in the importance of timely resolution of differing views and employee concerns, techniques for handling them, and the need to request expert assistance early in the process. They should also be trained in the handling of "reverse intimidation", i.e., managers must be able to insist on accountability and productivity while resolving differing views of employees. This training should be given to potential managers prior to their assumption of management positions at TVA. (We found OGC and IG personnel eager and willing to provide more and earlier support to the managers whenever requested).

The Human Resources organization of Nuclear Power should be strengthened from top to bottom and be trained to provide pro-active, timely support to managers similar to that being provided at Sequoyah. Experienced highly capable Human Resources' managers are urgently needed at Watts Bar and Browns Ferry. These people are key to early identification of personnel concerns and should be authorized to either resolve them or refer them to line management before they become grievances, employee concerns, EEO problems or DOL cases. Higher-level Human Resources management should be intimately aware of problems and potential problems at the sites and should pro-actively assist the managers and the Human Resources' managers at the sites to provide the breadth and depth of support needed in this difficult environment.

ECP personnel are also key players not only for the employees but for support to the managers. Most of the current personnel at these sites have performed satisfactorily, but some are exhausted due to the heavy demands placed on them under highly stressful conditions. A succession plan is needed to select highly capable technical people to replace current ECP personnel. This selection should be made to be important for career advancement. Selectees should be trained before installation in the ECP job and should be rotated (perhaps even promoted) back to their technical specialties after one to two years. This would preclude future burnouts and would help maintain an enthusiastic, aggressive approach to the solution of employee concerns. Furthermore, it will improve the perception of quality on the part of the ECP, since the incumbent is a mainstream technical person. Having the Manager, ECP report directly to the Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power, would also help to insure communications fidelity and timeliness.

Timely resolution of intimidation and harrassment (I&H) problems could also be facilitated by the <u>temporary</u> addition of a counselor experienced in handling these kinds of problems to report directly to the Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power. This individual would maintain close relationship with the managers, Human Resources' representatives and ECP managers at the sites, assist and advise them, and keep the Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power, advised.

Finally, we found, as did the IG in his audit of the ECP dated May 15, 1990, that although ECP communicated the results of investigations to concerned employees as required by procedures, the results were not communicated to other employees including managers. Recognizing the need to maintain employee confidentiality, we believe, as did the IG, that an expanded program of communications about employee concerns investigative findings and management's corrective actions would help build morale and promote awareness of adherence to standards. This expanded program of communications to point out TVA's activities should be targeted internally since the TVA employee is the one who needs the information. However, we believe that such communications should also cover differing views/employee concerns handled by line managers before they become a part of the ECP. This would encourage employees to utilize line management to handle their concerns.

HANDLING EMPLOYEE CONCERNS/DIFFERING VIEWS
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Carefully and quickly rereview and conclude, if possible, pending DOL cases.

- Carefully and quickly rereview known potential employee concern problems and make decisions on proper actions to be taken.

- Thoroughly train existing and potential managers in the importance of timely resolution of differing views and employee concerns, in the methods and techniques for handling them and in the importance of requesting expert assistance. Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power, should ensure that his managers utilize expert assistance.

- Strengthen the Human Resources organization from top to bottom to provide pro-active, timely support to management including installation of highly qualified Human Resources' managers at each site. Each should be given adequate authority.

- Institute a succession plan for ECP managers at each site. Select highly capable technical personnel and rotate the managers at Watts Bar and Browns Ferry.

- Install an experienced I&H "counselor" reporting directly to the Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power.

- Modify the organization of Nuclear Power so that the Manager, ECP reports directly to the Senior Vice President, Nuclear Power.

- Implement a communications plan to inform all employees about differing views/employee concerns, investigative findings and management's corrective actions to include (and perhaps emphasize) items handled by line management.

- Decrease the average time for handling employee concerns by ECP to 45 days for fiscal year 1990 and achieve even faster handling times in future years.

ATTACHMENT B
STABILITY

The instability of the Nuclear Power organization is a major contributor to the current environment of employee unrest. Instability in TVA's Nuclear Power organization has been a characteristic for many years. Instability has been perpetuated by world class events, TMI #2, change in TVA's construction plan, and shutdown of all the TVA Nuclear Power plants. Further instability is the natural result of the reorganization and restaffing of all elements in the Nuclear Power organization as well as the reduction-in-force (RIF) that has been a part of TVA for the better part of two and one-half years. The need for the restaffing and the reduction is not questioned, but it is important to establish the stability and the predictability for every employee soon.

Results of instability-induced unrest are evidenced in the lack of a team spirit (except at Sequoyah), general mistrust particularly at Watts Bar, and increased anxiety for most employees. All of these contribute to lack of productivity, which invites additional management pressure adding to the dour environment, which leads to additional complaints by the employees. This obviously feeds on itself. There is a constant loss of the best technical talent within Nuclear Engineering because they are searching for predictability, stability, and a more pleasant environment in which to work. The manning levels for engineers at the sites are not finalized. This is resulting in the possible prolonging of the RIF efforts. Finalization of plans for each site by Nuclear Power and publishing the predicted staffing for the next five years would add to a sense of stability. If this can be done without additional RIFs other than those which have been announced and by gradually reaching the agreed numbers by attrition, it would be particularly helpful in reducing unrest. One of the off-shoots of the restaffing is a general belief by "long-term" (i.e., greater than 10 years service) TVA employees that they probably don't have a bright future employed by TVA in the Nuclear Power organization. This problem could also be addressed after the necessary stability is achieved.

After Nuclear Power has finalized its plans for each site, these projected staffing plans should be announced to all employees. Simultaneously the Board of Directors should issue a strong declaration of their dedication to complete the Nuclear Power plants. These two actions would be strong stabilizing factors, particularly to long-term TVA employees.

STABILITY
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Nuclear Power should finalize the plans for each site, and predict TVA staffing for the next five years for each site and publish that prediction, showing outside contractors as well as TVA populations on a histogram. Adjust this published prediction to keep it up-to-date as the future becomes the present.

- After Nuclear Power has finalized its plans for each site, these projected staffing plans should be announced to all employees.

- Board of Directors should issue a strong declaration of dedication to complete all nuclear power plants.

- Install a site director at Watts Bar as soon as possible. He/she should be a people-oriented, "hero" type of leader. This will provide a constant owner of the Watts Bar effort and will release the Vice President, New Projects, to pay attention to Bellefonte as well as Watts Bar.

ATTACHMENT C
TEAMBUILDING

It is essential to the ultimate success of the TVA nuclear program to develop a team mentality and increase mutual trust between employees and management as soon as possible. Each of the sites has its own subculture, but the actions recommended for improving the work environment are applicable in differing degrees to all sites.

Communication at all levels needs to be improved. Top management is promulgating mission statements, policies, and instructions. At times these are not being understood or further promulgated at the next levels. As a result there exists a sense of "not knowing" at mid management levels. There is a perception that some managers don't carry out those instructions with which they disagree. Some managers have reached their positions because of technical ability and not managerial skills. Such skills can be improved by professional leadership training. This training will improve the ability to handle people. In general, managers are not adequately building self-esteem in people, instilling pride, listening or making people feel important or a part of a good team. Some managers are not at ease making contact with their people or drawing out their opinions. A noteworthy exception to the above is the Acting Site Director, Joe Bynum, at Sequoyah who is recognized throughout the organization as an excellent leader and communicator. He has accomplished this by interfacing with all employees at their work stations, having luncheons every two weeks with randomly selected employees, congratulating all employees one-on-one for exceptional accomplishment, and handling any employee concern problem in a timely manner. Other managers at Sequoyah have been influenced by this leadership and the team spirit is evident. Similar techniques would be beneficial at all sites.

The Roher, Hibles, and Replogle, Inc., consultants are respected by all upper management in Nuclear Power. They have helped a great deal by one-on-one work with individual managers to improve leadership and interaction between upper managers.

A recommended tool to assist in making TVA the place one wants to work is participative management, i.e, the establishment of the team environment. Participative management requires long-term commitments and must have the full support of ali management from top to first line supervisors. To be successful in incorporating participative management it is essential to develop clarity in the goals and the roles at all levels of management.

We agree that creation of a stable environment is of the highest priority as discussed in Attachment B. However, we also believe that teambuilding would be highly beneficial to the creation of the proper environment and should start as soon as possible. Each site has departments where such training and implementation could take place. At the current time there are at least two plant departments, for example, one in Sequoyah and one

in Browns Ferry using participatory management in the form of quality circles. (It is significant that the two managers involved are considered to be the best people managers at their sites.) After total commitment by upper and lower management is obtained, a deliberate selection for training and implementation of teams can be commenced, first choosing those areas where success is most likely. These teams and their managers must receive first class training and consultation. Successes of the teams should be recognized and publicized as the program expands.

In addition to its value to employee morale, team participation is an effective method to assist in changing to a quality and productivity driven culture. Management must set the climate that will nurture and reward participation. A quality-driven culture is one in which all are encouraged to suggest methods to improve quality and efficient operations. The cardinal sin in that culture is to not bring forward a quality issue for solution.

A recommended goal is to change the TVA nuclear culture to one that encourages all employees to bring forward quality concerns and suggestions to improve productivity. This entails a total commitment by all levels of management.

The nuclear program after a long period of negative news is entering a period of increasing successes. All employees need to be told of these successes in order to start rebuilding their pride of accomplishment. Full power at Sequoyah was a major cause for "celebration" for the team. Other recent items that could be publicized to employees include (a) Watts Bar engineering department increased productivity of 400 percent, (b) the letter to the NRC reporting that Browns Ferry was ready for the Environmental Qualification Audit, and (c) publicize and celebrate at Watts Bar when 1,000,000 feet of cable has been pulled.

TVA was once the world leader in nuclear power production. Many employees are waiting to lead and be led back to the time of total quality operation and pride of accomplishment. That will be when the nuclear TVA will again be a "Fun" place to work.

TEAMBUILDING
RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a long-term teambuilding plan of action be constructed as soon as possible that includes:

- Management/supervisor training program to improve managerial skills
- Emphasis to improve line communication up and down
- Establishing a system in all areas for team-oriented participatory management
- Schedule to implement team training
- A plan of celebrating positive events

ATTACHMENT D
TRAINING

Handling of emergent conflicts in an organization can end in one of two results: (1) Improvement in relations and communications between subordinate and supervisor or (2) Schism in the relations between subordinate and supervisor leading, possibly, to mistrust of all management and a proliferation of future employee conflicts. Training of the manager in management disciplines such as personnel administration elements, leadership, communications, team building, labor relations, and conflict resolution would expose the manager to the tools he needs to become an effective manager. Selecting the right personnel for promotion to supervisor/manager status and providing the necessary training are other key elements in proper handling of conflicts in the TVA organization.

Duke Power Company, an electric utility universally admired for many things, including stability, morale, leadership, development of people, and performance uses a three-phased training program. The first level of management training is for new supervisors/managers or those responsible for the performance of other people for the first time in their career with Duke. This is a four-week course and gives the basic management administrative tools as outlined above. A considerable portion of the time is devoted to leadership training. Case studies as well as videotaped sessions of role playing are used in the leadership courses. It is considered that training similar to that given at Duke Power should be given to TVA Nuclear Power managers/supervisors. Such training will greatly assist in solving the problems associated with managing conflicts. Once training of all the TVA Nuclear Power supervisors and managers is accomplished and actions recommended in Attachments B and C are taken, the environment in which all the employees of the TVA Nuclear Power organization work should be greatly improved. Significant reduction in the number of cases of discrimination, intimidation, as well as reverse intimidation, should result.

After successful implementation of the first phase of a training program similar to the Duke Power Company Program, the second phase (introduction to additional tools of management needed by middle managers), and third phase (preparation for upper management including Vice President) could be undertaken. (Finally, a program to inject new graduates from technical colleges into a protected two-year training scheme must be instituted in order to refresh the talent in the TVA and replace the large drain of engineering talent that has occurred and is still occurring.)

TRAINING
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a management/supervisor training program similar to that given at Duke Power that prepares an employee to perform the management and supervisory functions required in the supervisory and management positions in TVA's Nuclear Power organization.

- Prepare an enhanced screening process in the selection of managers and supervisors to improve the likelihood of success of the development of good and effective leaders and supervisors.

- Provide management/supervisor training to existing managers and supervisors, as well as selected, and screened, new managers and supervisors. For upper-level managers provide the course of shorter duration tailored to the perceived individual needs.

- Institute a continuing college recruitment and training program that develops new TVA talent in a protected (from bumping rights) atmosphere. These training billets and budgets for them, should be in addition to the regular positions and budgets.

ATTACHMENT E
PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

There is a perception within portions of TVA Nuclear Power that personnel letters and policies from management are "just rhetoric" and that they often are not backed by action plans and finances to execute the plans. There is a strong belief that policies and procedures are too long, too numerous, and too difficult to understand. "People are overwhelmed by TVA rules and paperwork." As a result some managers and employees do not follow some policies and procedures, and frequently there is no control system to ensure that they are followed.

We understand that there have been previous efforts to simplify and reduce the size and number of policies and procedures and that some of these efforts may still be ongoing. Time restraints precluded going into these efforts in any detail, but we feel it is worthwhile to document our conclusions and recommendations even though they do not cover all areas which need improvement.

Reduction-in-Force Procedures (RIFs)

Recognizing that RIFs are always most difficult, it appears that RIFs in Nuclear Power could have been handled better, for example, it is perceived by some employees (particularly long-term ones) that they were not treated with as much dignity and concern as they deserved and that assistance in finding other jobs was inadequate. Furthermore, some people who were riffed were left onsite with resulting adverse impact on other employees.

Performance Evaluation System (PES)

The current PES is cumbersome (6-7 pages in length for managers) and is very time-consuming to properly perform. Performance evaluation is one of the most important personnel and managerial activities a manager must perform. If the PES takes too much effort and is only casually monitored by upper management, then it will inevitably be given low priority. The PES is one of the most direct methods that communicates the TVA value system to the employee and his evaluator. For example, an effective PES tells them both how much TVA values productivity versus leadership versus personal appearance. It informs the employee and his manager what is required in order to improve the performance of the employee. If the manager and the employee go over the PES carefully and develop some of the solutions to the shortcomings in concert, enhanced managerial competence and employee confidence in his management should result.

Personnel Documentation

Proper documentation of personnel accomplishments and problems is a vital part of leadership and management. It is important that managers document such accomplishments and problems in a timely, thorough manner to permit rewarding of exceptional performance and correction of weak performance. This documentation is closely related to (and should be used in) performance evaluations discussed above. Documentation is key to maintenance of morale, reduction of employee concerns, and to settlement of grievances, EEO problems, and DOL cases.

Such documentation is spotty throughout Nuclear Power. Some managers have done an excellent job--others have failed completely. Instructions on how to document properly are not clearly understood by the managers. Improved procedures and training are needed along with a control system to ensure that managers document well and in a timely manner.

Position Descriptions

It is important that position descriptions clearly describe the position required to be filled. All instances of the position descriptions being a resume' of the incumbent must be eliminated to avoid cronyism and favoritism.

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Top management should ensure that enuciated policies are supported by implementation plans and budget dollars where appropriate. Adherence to such policies should be monitored and controlled.

- Future RIFs, if required, should be carefully planned and implemented in such a manner that employees are treated with dignity and given individual assistance offsite in finding other positions.

- Procedures for documentation of personnel problems and accomplishments should be made clearer and more concise. Training on documentation should be given to all managers. Controls should be implemented to ensure that documentation is done well and in a timely manner.

- A program should be implemented to ensure that position descriptions are written for the position rather than for the individual.