

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:

DOCKET NO:

INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW

ROBERT JAMES MULLIN

LOCATION: ATLANTA, GEORGIA

PAGES: 1 thru 101

DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1987

ACE-FEDERAL REPORTERS, INC.

Official Reporters
444 North Capitol Street
Washington, D.C. 20001
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW

OF

ROBERT JAMES MULLIN

Manager, Nuclear Fuel

Division of Nuclear Services

6N 40A Blue Ridge

1101 Market Street

Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402-3418

Nuclear Regulatory Commission

101 Marietta Street

20th Floor Conference Room

Atlanta, Georgia

The interview commenced, pursuant to notice, at
10:00 a.m.

BEFORE:

NRC Region II Office of Investigations:

LARRY L. ROBINSON, Investigator

DANIEL D. MURPHY, Investigator

F. MARK REINHART, Investigator

P R O C E E D I N G S

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MR. MURPHY: For the record, it is now 10 a.m.,
February 10, 1987.

This is an interview of Robert J. Mullin, who is
employed by the Tennessee Valley Authority. The location of
the interview is Atlanta, Georgia.

Present for the interview are Larry Robinson,
Mark Reinhart and Dan Murphy.

As agreed, this interview is being transcribed
by a court reporter.

The subject of this interview concerns the March
20th, 1986 letter from TVA to the NRC regarding compliance
with Appendix B.

Mr. Mullin, would you please stand up and raise
your right hand.

M. J. Miller

1 Whereupon,

2 ROBERT J. MULLIN

3 having been first duly sworn by Investigator Murphy, was
4 examined and testified as follows:

5 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Mullin, would you for the
6 record, please relate to us your educational and employment
7 experience with some emphasis on the positions that you have
8 held at TVA?

9 MR. MULLIN: In my educational experience, I have
10 a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering and a master's
11 degree in nuclear engineering, ^{and} an MBA.

12 I spent three years in the Navy, four years at
13 Argonne National Laboratory and 18 years at TVA. Most of
14 that time at TVA has been in the nuclear fuel area, and I
15 spent two years in the nuclear quality assurance area.

16 MR. MURPHY: And your current position?

17 MR. MULLIN: I am Manager of Nuclear Fuels.

18 MR. MURPHY: What year did you start.

19 MR. MULLIN: 1968.

20 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Mullin, as we have said, we are
21 looking into the March 28, 1986 letter from TVA to the NRC
22 regarding Appendix B.

23 Would you please relate to us what role you
24 played in the development either of the letter or in the
25 technical reviews that you took part in.

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MULLIN: At the time the, and I believe it was ~~the~~ January 3rd when the letter from the NRC came, I was the Director of Quality Assurance at TVA. So I was involved in coordinating the response to the letter. That's basically what I did do, help coordinate the response to it. That was in the early stage of coordinating the response.

I was, as of February 13th, no longer the Director of Quality Assurance. I became Manager of Fuels on February 13th. So I was not Director of Quality Assurance when the letter went out, but I was in still in quality assurance work during that transition period up until September of '86.

MR. MURPHY: What instructions did you receive from your management related to what you were to do?

MR. MULLIN: I don't remember really receiving explicit instructions. A letter was handed to me by ^UTVA attorney who I think was the first one to receive it. We were in a meeting one night and he handed me the letter because it was an Appendix B letter obviously pertaining to the quality assurance program, and I just took it for action and assumed that I would be responsible for a response. I don't remember how I was specifically told to coordinate the response. It was just kind of a natural outgrowth of having that job.

MR. MURPHY: Who was your Supervisor at the time?

1 MR. MULLIN: At that time I basically reported to
2 Chuck Mason in terms of an every-day working relationship.
3 Hugh Parris was my Supervisor also at the time the letter
4 came in.

5 MR. MURPHY: Did either of those two relate to
6 you what they expected you to do in relationship to the
7 letter?

8 MR. MULLIN: Subsequent to when it came in they
9 did. It's not clear to me exactly what transpired. I can
10 remember conversations with respect to the schedule and some
11 emphasis on getting a response prepared. I think there
12 probably were discussions as to how we would go about doing
13 it and so forth. I don't remember any specific directions
14 with respect to the process of doing it.

15 MR. MURPHY: You never received any written
16 instructions?

17 MR. MULLIN: No, sir, not to my knowledge and not
18 to my recollection, no.

19 MR. MURPHY: Was there a distinction at the
20 beginning because I think the NRC letter stated that it was
21 really two things they wanted.

22 One was the response of whether or not you were
23 in compliance with Appendix B and, second, a response to 10
24 or 11 perceptions that were addressed by NSRS. Is that
25 correct?

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1 MR. MULLIN: That is my recollection of the
2 letter, right.

3 MR. MURPHY: What was your role in regards to the
4 11 perceptions? What did you do?

5 MR. MULLIN: Well, with respect to the 11
6 perceptions we, the QA staff and myself, we helped determine
7 points of contact, people who were either managing
8 corrective action projects in an area of a perception, for
9 instance, the instrumentation concern they cited or welding.

10
11 We developed a list of contacts, people that
12 were involved in the activities that were going on and in
13 some cases at least there were already projects and programs
14 under way to correct or identify deficiencies.

15 Where there weren't, we identified through the
16 Site Director and through people in the Division of
17 Construction, you know, major points of contact in each area
18 of a perception and then proceeded to work with those people
19 to develop responses to the perceptions which were
20 admittedly at various stages in this process somewhat vague,
21 you know, the perceptions that were given.

22 In a nutshell, that is the role we played.

23 MR. MURPHY: Did you ever get all these folks
24 together at one time to have a meeting to discuss your
25 approach to this?

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1 MR. MULLIN: We -- let me think for a second. I
2 haven't had a chance to really brush up and some of these
3 things have been about a year ago. As I recall, we prepared,
4 and a lot of work was done on the phone by people that were
5 located, co-located with some of the people that were
6 involved in these activities.

7 The product of that was some written responses
8 to the NSRS perceptions.

9 I believe in late January we did have a meeting
10 at Watts Bar where many of those people who had provided
11 responses were in attendance, and we went over things like
12 the initial slide that was shown to Commissioner Asselstine,
13 the NRC letter which followed, perhaps Mr. Bean's letter
14 requested ^{ing} an extension or confirming the granting of an
15 extension.

16 The material we had been given thus far, and we
17 probably had slides on that and probably slides on some
18 additional material that had come in, you know, like the
19 14th, 15th and 16th from the NSRS. There was additional
20 information coming in all the time that we were trying to
21 get out to people that were responding.

22 As I recall, in late January, probably the last
23 week in January we did have a meeting at Watts Bar basically
24 to go over the responses that we coordinated and ^{to} see if
25 people had ^{OK} comments _A them, if the responses were ^A factual and

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1 if there basically any problems and did anyone see anything
2 that was in there about the responses we had prepared.

3 MR. MURPHY: Did you give any written
4 instructions to the line managers who were designated as the
5 individuals who would respond to the II perceptions?

6 MR. MULLIN: No, I don't think we gave any
7 written instructions in terms of how to respond. Now
8 subsequent to when the responses were prepared I recall we
9 did give some instructions on pulling together a package of
10 material that would be available on site for the NRC to come
11 and look at if they wanted to substantiate the response.

12 In other words, as I recall, we did send out a
13 memo sometime in February telling, and I believe it was
14 addressed to the managers of the people preparing the
15 responses, but it indicated several categories of material
16 that it would be desirable to have, whether they were
17 specifications, corrective action plans or whatever other
18 information they might have that would support what they had
19 said in their written response.

20 Our objective was to have this information
21 available in a certain order and format so that people that
22 wanted to come in and substantiate the response could.

23 As I recall, those were somewhat after the fact
24 instructions and the only instructions that were really
25 given. They were given in terms of, as I say, supporting

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1 information that should be available, pulling it together
2 and having it in neat order and things like that. That is my
3 recollection of the only real instructions.

4 These are all recollections and there may be
5 something that I'm forgetting because it has been a year.

6 MR. MURPHY: That is all we can ask of you.

7 MR. MULLIN: As I say, I haven't had a chance
8 based on just hearing about it ^(this interview) yesterday, I haven't had a
9 chance to go back and look at anything or talk to anybody.

10 MR. MURPHY: In response to the 11 perceptions,
11 were folks asked to respond as to whether they were in
12 compliance with Appendix B or whether the response was a
13 valid concern?

14 MR. MULLIN: That the perception was a valid
15 concern?

16 MR. MURPHY: A valid concern, yes.

17 MR. MULLIN: With respect to the individual
18 responses, I think it was the latter it's my recollection.
19 We are saying here is a one-line bullet item NSRS concern,
20 and you as a manager or line manager in that area or perhaps
21 someone that was managing the corrective action program or
22 process in that area please response. Some responses came in
23 and they maybe were half a page and some were three pages,
24 but they were basically responding to the perception,
25 whether the perception is right or wrong and if there is

[Signature]

1 some truth in the perception, what actions TVA has been
2 taking to correct that perception.

3 So that was the basic expectation from the
4 people that were responding to a specific concern.

5 MR. MURPHY: Then you weren't asking these line
6 managers to respond as to whether they were in compliance
7 with Appendix B or not?

8 MR. MULLIN: No, sir, not to my recollection.

9 MR. MURPHY: How were you going to determine
10 that, based on their responses?

11 MR. MULLIN: I think, yes, probably based on
12 their responses. I think there was also some feeling based
13 just on knowledge of the program and what was going on that
14 we were in compliance.

15 In other words, if you recall, and I'm a little
16 hazy on dates, but I think the NRC letter wanted an answer
17 in two parts. They wanted a real quick answer on the overall
18 compliance question, and then there was an extended period
19 of time for detailed responses to the 11 perceptions.

20 I think kind of ~~in~~consistent with that, we had,
21 based on discussions with the NSRS people that had the
22 concerns, and I think generally TVA management had come to
23 the conclusion that they were in compliance overall with
24 Appendix B, and then it was a matter of answering the 11
25 perceptions.

[Signature]

1 That is my recollection of how it was. And it is
2 certainly conceivable that if anything came up in answering
3 those 11 perceptions, you know, ^{if} eight of them were brand
4 new, that were really serious, very, very serious, I'm sure
5 it would have gone back and changed the conclusion, but
6 there had been discussions and meetings with the NSRS people
7 concerning their perceptions, and some of the conclusions
8 were that there was really nothing there that we didn't
9 already know and weren't already working on.

10 It was a matter then of describing what we were
11 doing or if we disagreed with a perception, if the managers
12 in the area disagreed with the perception they would explain
13 that, and if they agreed with it, they would explain what
14 they had done to correct it or were doing to correct it.

15 MR. MURPHY: Were any of these perceptions new to
16 you? Had they been items that had not been brought to your
17 attention before?

18 MR. MULLIN: I can't say that I personally was
19 familiar with every item, but generally the answer is no. I
20 think generally there was nothing new there, and I'm trying
21 to think what the 11 perceptions were one by one, but I
22 don't know that there was anything new that was surprising.

23 MR. MURPHY: Would it help for you to look at the
24 list of perception?

25 MR. MULLIN: Sure, if you have it.

RJM

1 (The document was placed before the witness.)

2 I think one thing I should explain to you is I
3 had a program responsibility for sort of a whole program,
4 whole QA program. I had an implementation responsibility for
5 just the operations quality assurance. I did not have
6 implementation responsibilities for design and construction.

7 I had been in the job since October of '84. So
8 my familiarity with some of these would not be as deep as
9 someone that had been involved in a total construction
10 project and so forth.

11 So where something may be a little bit new to
12 me, it may certainly not be new to many of the others that
13 have been involved because I was somewhat new.

14 MR. MURPHY: Who had the implementation
15 responsibilities for construction and design?

16 MR. MULLIN: Well, at that time the actual
17 quality responsibility ^{is} as in the organizations that were
18 responsible for construction or engineering. It was not
19 centralized. They were saying, hey, the one that does the
20 work is responsibility ^{is} for the quality and the one that
21 manages the work is responsible for quality.

22 The concept was that the program be described,
23 if you will, and relayed from a central location, a program
24 that would cover all areas, but implementation was somewhat
25 segmented at that time.

RAC

1 MR. MURPHY: Correct if I'm wrong. Did you say
2 that TVA had kind of arrived at an early decision that they
3 were in compliance with Appendix B.

4 MR. MULLIN: Not formally. As I say, I'm thinking
5 when I had, and I can't really speak for other people, but
6 based on meetings that I had with NSRS and times when they
7 came down and met with us and in reading their concerns and
8 in reading expansions of their concerns and in reading the
9 responses that were coming in, it was kind of a conclusion
10 that was evolving in my mind that we were over a period of
11 time. I can't say when I really came to that conclusion.

12 It just seemed to me that we definitely had a
13 program that was being implemented and there were problems,
14 but in response to the specific question that NRC asked in
15 their letter, which by the way I thought was a tough
16 question to answer. TVA didn't answer a different question.
17 They tried to answer the question that was asked, and I
18 think that was a very tough question to answer.

19 It's my perception that perhaps that was given
20 to Mr. Denton and he asked it just as it was given, but
21 taking that question for my interpretation of it, my feeling
22 was very definitely that as this thing evolved that we were
23 in compliance and this was kind of a judgment response.
24 That's not to say there weren't problems.

25 I can't say positively that I had a prior

RJM

1 awareness of all of these, but I think certainly the vast
2 majority of them I was aware of. I was aware that there was
3 a cable, electrical cable problem and that work had been
4 stopped in that area, and the same way with the instrument
5 line inadequacies.

6 Some of them I have perhaps not heard expressed
7 this way and the exact terms and phraseology that was used
8 as they expanded on the concern. I knew there were areas of
9 work going on on "Q" lists. So I would say that many, many
10 of them I had knowledge of, not intimate familiarity with,
11 but knowledge of, but I can't ^{SAY} that I was familiar and
12 knowledgeable in every one of them.

13 MR. REINHART: Bob, you mentioned a minute ago
14 about the difference between the program and the
15 implementation, and we recognize that, and yet in the
16 response in most of the discussion we have had so far people
17 say, yes, we had programs and yes, we had topicalis and, yes,
18 we had procedures, but nobody really addresses the execution
19 of the program and the field implementation. Why is that?

20 MR. MULLIN: When you say nobody addresses it,
21 what do you mean, in what sense.

22 MR. REINHART: TVA when asked about compliance,
23 seems to come back and talk a lot about the program, but it
24 doesn't appear, and correct me, I am trying to find
25 somewhere where TVA went out and tried to analyze the

Rjm

1 implementation.

2 MR. MULLIN: Let me talk about implementation. As
3 far as the implementation of the operational QA program, the
4 inspectors, the surveillance people and the organization at
5 the site where there was an operational aspect, Browns Ferry
6 and Sequoyah, I was responsible for implementation.

7 I had an operational QA organization at Watts
8 Par that I was responsible for. There was also a
9 construction quality assurance organization and quality
10 control organization for Unit 2. The construction people were
11 responsible for the implementation of that program.

12 In engineering there was a quality assurance
13 organization in Knoxville that had responsibility for the
14 implementation of their program.

15 So there is no question about implementation. It
16 was assigned. And I think the responses that we prepared
17 addressed implementation that hadn't been done.

18 The NSRS in the meeting we had with them
19 admitted that we had a program and were satisfied with 17-1
20 and 17-2. I remember that response. They had some questions
21 which they didn't define about the nuclear quality assurance
22 manual, but program, having a program generally in terms of
23 the written program did not seem to be an issue.

24 MR. REINHART: And that's my question. It wasn't
25 the issue, but the responses all seemed to say we have a

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1 program and we have procedures, but the responses never did
2 address implementation.

3 MR. MULLIN: Well, in the sense they talked about
4 actions that were being taken -- they were certainly talking
5 about actions that were being taken to correct problems, and
6 that's implementation in my view.

7 As I say, I haven't re-read the responses
8 recently, but my recollection is that they address the
9 implementation aspects of those areas.

10 MR. REINHART: If somebody were asking you to
11 address, you know, go out and verify that the QA program is
12 implemented in these 11 areas, what would be a good way to
13 do that?

14 MR. MULLIN: Well, you could go and do an audit
15 and you could talk to the people that are working in those
16 areas. What we did sort of is along those lines. We talked
17 to the people that were working in those areas and gave them
18 a chance ^{to} ~~a~~ response ^d to the NSRS concern, and then had Stone
19 and Webster do a verification for us by sending six or seven
20 people to the Watts Bar site for approximately a week.

21 They did the field, if you will, the field
22 verification of the responses. As I recall, they looked at
23 records and they talked to the people that were involved in
24 developing the responses and they talked to the people that
25 were involved in the work. That was a check that was done

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1 after the responses had been largely developed.

2 The whole motivation was to verify the response
3 and get it right. I think a lot of folks were very, very
4 concerned about the importance of having an accurate and
5 honest response.

6 MR. REINHART: I see.

7 MR. MULLIN: That was kind of the field
8 verification, if you will.

9 MR. REINHART: Did anybody go and take these 11
10 perceptions and say let's see what QA audits have said in
11 these areas and let's see what corrective actions have been
12 identified and completed in these areas and what NCR's are
13 outstanding in these areas and did a little analysis of
14 that?

15 MR. MULLIN: As I recall, that was looked at in
16 terms of outstanding NSRS concerns that were still open.

17 MR. REINHART: I'm talking about really the
18 independent^{CE} of QA going in and verifying through audit the
19 implementation and follow-up and corrective action work in
20 the 11 areas.

21 MR. MULLIN: Let me just tell you that there are
22 several things that I believe were looked at, or at least
23 looked at or considered. There are INPO reviews that were
24 done. There were NRC inspections in areas that were done.
25 There were NSRS concerns for Watts Bar, many of which had

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1 been closed, and there are construction inspections and
2 construction audits and the operational audits that we did
3 that are prescribed and required at a certain frequency.

4 I don't know that a specific side-by-side
5 comparison was done. I think generally the people
6 responsible for preparing responses or reviewing responses
7 that were prepared were aware of audit results in that area
8 and problems in that area.

9 MR. REINHART: Did anybody put a document
10 together of all these things, the INPO reviews and the NRC
11 inspections at NSRS?

12 MR. MULLIN: I don't think anyone put a document
13 together but, as I recall, I can remember conversations and
14 I'm reasonably positive that people looked at those things.

15 MR. REINHART: I see.

16 MR. MULLIN: I can remember some of the Stone and
17 Webster people reading NSRS reports. I can remember the team
18 we had down there doing the verification and I can remember
19 having some NSRS people go and make sure that that Stone and
20 Webster team had access to the employee concerns files.

21 I remember going down there myself on a Saturday
22 to be sure they were getting what they needed to get.

23 I don't believe that a document was ever put
24 together that compiled categories of audit deviations in
25 each of these areas.

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1 I take that back. I think if one looked through
2 the records very carefully -- I know there was a document
3 put together -- we put a special team together that went out
4 and looked at the employee concerns in each of these areas
5 because NSRS had put together that document. We looked and
6 put a team together and examined those concerns.

7 I can't recall if there was a one-by-one
8 comparison done but, as I say, generally you know what the
9 deviation^s are in your areas. They are not that numerous. We
10 knew what the problems were on instrument line inadequacies
11 and we knew if there had been a CAR, a corrective action
12 report written on a "Q" list.

13 I think in most cases the responses to the
14 perceptions actually listed a corrective action report or an
15 NSRS concern or a notice to NRC that had been filed about
16 the concern. In many cases they listed those.

17 I think it was intrinsic to the evaluation
18 process, but I don't know that anyone put together an
19 overall point-by-point comparison. That is my impression.

20 MR. REINHART: I just wanted to get your feel for
21 what you thought was done.

22 MR. ROBINSON: One question while we are at this
23 point and then I want to kind of take you back to the
24 beginning and kind of chronologically go through it as best
25 I can.

Rm

1 MR. MULLIN: Okay.

2 MR. ROBINSON: At any point in time did you make
3 your own evaluation of the technical data that was being
4 received, not only from your contacts in the areas of the
5 perception, but from the NSRS, additional NSRS data? Were
6 you responsible for making any kind of an evaluation as to
7 whether or not the NSRS supplemental data outweighed or was
8 of an equal value to the data coming in from the line?

9 MR. MULLIN: Well, we had one-line concerns
10 initially which people started to try to determine what they
11 meant by that, what the NSRS meant by that concern. Then as
12 our additional information came in, I would read that and
13 people on my staff would read and we would get it out to the
14 people that were preparing the response.

15 We got additional compilations of employee
16 concerns in each area. I had people go and review and
17 summarize each of those concerns. I read that data.

18 My impressions were as that evolved that there
19 was really nothing new coming out. In fact, I can explicitly
20 remember some of the employee concerns that they had cited
21 in that connection seemed tenuous at best to the original
22 perception.

23 I don't know that anyone ever said, you know,
24 Bob Mullin, make an evaluation. Again, it was kind of a
25 process. Every time you would get something you would read

Bob Mullin

1 it and evaluate it and maybe be a little chagrined because
2 there never seemed to be an end to what was coming in, but
3 at the same time, you didn't want to cut off what was coming
4 in.

5 It came in at different times, it came in in
6 different formats and it came in in some areas ^{MORE} ~~for~~ than in
7 others, and when it came I would read it and others would
8 read it, I'm sure. I know I read it. I didn't write anything
9 down per se, but made a determination of does this shed any
10 new light.

11 I tried to make sure that the information got to
12 the people that were responding in that area to see if it
13 impacted them or if it made a difference to what they were
14 doing. d

15 MR. ROBINSON: Was the mode of operation an
16 honest objective look at the incoming NSRS data regardless
17 of whether or not you had heard about it before? The
18 question is whether it is a valid concern or not at that
19 time. So regardless of whether you were aware of a concern
20 or not before, that is not so important. I would not think
21 that would be so important as to whether or not it's a valid
22 concern at that time.

23 So my question is when the supplemental
24 information kept coming in from NSRS was it more of a mode
25 of getting it to the appropriate line people and having them

R. J. [unclear]

1 go out and develop evidence to show that that not
 2 necessarily was a problem, or was it more of made of giving
 3 it to the line people and say, hey, this may be a real
 4 problem and go out and take a look at this and see if we've
 5 got a problem here?

6 MR. MULLIN: Both. In my mind, both. In some
 7 areas like the instrumentation line inadequacies, for
 8 instance, there was already a major program underway there.
 9 There was one underway in welding and there was one underway
 10 in cabling. In some of those areas to the people intimately
 11 familiar, and I wasn't always in those areas, my impression
 12 is that there was probably nothing new coming in.

13 The sense that we were working was both one of
 14 here is some new information, does it add anything to the
 15 perception already stated, does it make it more serious,
 16 does it change your corrective action plan and things you
 17 have already got under way, and there was also a sense
 18 that since it was sent to us, there was also sense that we
 19 had to respond and address it, including the employee
 20 concern compilation that came at the end.

21 So I would say both, to be honest.

22 MR. ROBINSON: Were you ever asked either
 23 verbally or in writing, who were you feeding this
 24 information to?

25 MR. MULLIN: Well, let me think.

1 We pulled together the responses. As far as
2 feeding it. The initial effort was completed in
3 approximately mid-January, and there were two people, or two
4 Stone and Webster people reviewed that initial cut, if you
5 will.

6 MR. ROBINSON: Who were they?

7 MR. MULLIN: A man by the name of Sullivan and
8 Richard Kelly.

9 MR. ROBINSON: And what was the consensus on the
10 initial cut?

11 MR. MULLIN: I presented in each of the 11 areas
12 the information we had pulled together, and it was
13 relatively brief, you know, a few pages at most on each
14 area. Their feeling on reviewing it and talking with us was
15 that we were in compliance with Appendix B. That was their
16 conclusion that morning when they went over that data. That
17 was their conclusion.

18 MR. ROBINSON: Was their conclusion based on
19 their reviewing of the data, or what was your conclusion at
20 the first cut? Did you have a conclusion?

21 MR. MULLIN: I felt that way, too, at the first
22 cut.

23 MR. ROBINSON: Okay. Were you briefing Sullivan,
24 and what was this other fellow's name?

25 MR. MULLIN: Kelly.

Rjm

1 MR. ROBINSON: Did you essentially tell them
2 that, or was that part of their conclusion, or do you know
3 if they definitely made their independent conclusion?

4 MR. MULLIN: I believe they made a conclusion.

5 MR. ROBINSON: Independently?

6 MR. MULLIN: Independently, right. I don't know
7 that I explicitly said what my conclusion was. I may have
8 conveyed that in a conversation. I don't remember. I think I
9 had made that conclusion, but I don't think I influenced
10 them. That was not the role they were supposed to play. I
11 think their conclusion, in my judgment, was independent, but
12 similar.

13 MR. ROBINSON: From that point on obviously the
14 technical work went on because you were getting some more
15 input from NSRS and also from your line organization people.
16 How much of a role did Mason or Cottle or TVA employees
17 play, to your knowledge, in the evaluation of that data?

18 MR. MULLIN: I'm not really sure I can say how
19 much of a role. I think Mr. Mason was aware of the data that
20 was coming in and the responses that were being developed. I
21 think Mr. Cottle, since he was a Site Director at Watts Bar
22 and these are the places where the questions were centered,
23 played more of a role.

24 I think of course the predominant role in
25 developing responses was TVA personnel. I think the Stone

Bar

1 and Webster people like Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Kelly, were
2 advising Mr. White relative to their conclusions
3 independently.

4 Have I responded to your question?

5 MR. ROBINSON: I think so. You were kind of the
6 focal point for the gathering of this technical information
7 now?

8 MR. MULLIN: Not necessarily. I wouldn't say I
9 was the focal point necessarily, you know, for the
10 evaluation ~~perhaps~~

11 MR. ROBINSON: Did you perceive your role as just
12 kind of collecting and organizing?

13 MR. MULLIN: No. Certainly that was part of it,
14 but I also perceived my role that if I had a problem, that
15 was my job at that point in time to make that problem known.
16 If my ^{conscience} ~~conscious~~ was bothering me that we were not in
17 compliance, it was obviously my responsibility to say that.

18 So I served the function of gathering and
19 coordinating, as I said initially, but I also considered if
20 I had a contrary view to what I had initially, if I
21 subsequently developed a contrary view, that I would
22 obviously have the responsibility to say that.

23 MR. ROBINSON: At any point in time in the
24 evaluation did you ever have that problem?

25 MR. MULLIN: No, not really. Not really.

Done

1 MR. ROBINSON: I kind of want to go back to when
2 you first -- and when we very first started the interview
3 you talked about a meeting in the evening with I guess
4 TVA/OGC when you first got the letter from NRC asking for
5 the response?

6 MR. MULLIN: It was not a meeting with OGC. There
7 was an OGC member there simply because there always is.
8 He was assigned to Hugh Parris at that time.

9 MR. ROBINSON: Who was at the meeting, to the
10 best of your recollection?

11 MR. MULLIN: I think probably site directors and
12 Mr. Mason and major division type managers.

13 MR. ROBINSON: Was the purpose of the meeting to
14 talk about that letter?

15 MR. MULLIN: Not, not at all.

16 MR. ROBINSON: What was the purpose of the
17 meeting?

18 MR. MULLIN: I don't really recall now to be
19 completely honest. It was ^a staff meeting, division level
20 meeting to talk about the program in general, and during a
21 break in the meeting the fellow came in and he had a couple
22 copies of the letter and he handed one to me.

23 MR. ROBINSON: Do you remember who that OGC
24 fellow was?

25 MR. MULLIN: Doug Nichols.

Rail

1 MR. ROBINSON: Doug Nichols?

2 MR. MULLIN: Right.

3 MR. ROBINSON: Did he make any comments about
4 that letter when he gave it to you?

5 MR. MULLIN: No, I don't remember any explicit
6 comments. I remember the sense that I recognized and perhaps
7 he did that it was a serious question, but I don't remember
8 anything specific that was said by Doug. You might have also
9 noted that they put a short fuse on it, too, I think.

10 MR. ROBINSON: The letter?

11 MR. MULLIN: Yes.

12 MR. ROBINSON: Do you recall, or were you present
13 at a meeting with the Board of Directors in NSRS when Bob
14 Sauer went through his presentation again?

15 MR. MULLIN: That was a meeting that was held --
16 it was held with the Board of Directors, but it wasn't held
17 specifically for that purpose. It was held for the purpose
18 of preparing for an NRC meeting the following day in
19 Washington, and a portion of that near the end of that
20 meeting, since the Board had not heard the presentation that
21 Mr. Sauer had made to Commissioner Asselstine, they had
22 asked that he come and make the presentation to them. That
23 took place mid to late afternoon of that day, and I was
24 present there, yes.

25 MR. ROBINSON: What was generally the tone of

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1 that meeting with respect to Mr. Sauer's presentation? Was
2 it just a restaging of the presentation with no discussion
3 or was there discussion?

4 MR. MULLIN: My recollection is that it was
5 basically a restaging. I don't remember a lot of discussion.
6 There was very little discussion and very little questioning
7 of Sauer, as I recall, except perhaps by one or two of the
8 board members, and that was, as I recall, fairly minor. I
9 don't think there was a lot of discussion, but it was
10 basically in my recollection a restaging.

11 MR. ROBINSON: Did you ask Sauer any questions
12 about his perception?

13 MR. MULLIN: No. I had had meetings prior to
14 that, and I think most people had. There was no need really
15 at that session to ask questions.

16 MR. ROBINSON: How soon after the December 19th,
17 1985 presentation to Mr. Asselstine did you find out about
18 that presentation?

19 MR. MULLIN: I guess when I got the letter I
20 believe is when I found out about it.

21 MR. ROBINSON: So sometime after January 3rd?

22 MR. MULLIN: That is my recollection, right.

23 MR. ROBINSON: So on December 19th, 1985 Sauer
24 makes a statement to a Commissioner that generally Appendix
25 B requirements are not being met at Watts Bar, and as the

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1 Manager of Quality Assurance you didn't really know anything
2 about that until Nichols gave you the letter at that
3 meeting?

4 MR. MULLIN: That is my recollection. I don't
5 know that there was -- again, I don't know that there was
6 any publicity about it and I don't think anyone called me
7 about it. To the best of my recollection, I was not aware.
8 The NSRS operated fairly independently.

9 MR. ROBINSON: After the meeting at which Sauer
10 made the representation to the Board, was there another
11 meeting concerning the response to the NRC with the short
12 time frame after that Board meeting?

13 MR. MULLIN: Let's see. We had a meeting I
14 believe both before and after that Board meeting. I had gone
15 up and met with the NSRS and with some other people prior to
16 the Board meeting to try and understand better what the
17 issues ^{were} and try and understand their point of view.

18 I believe after the Board meeting there was a
19 meeting where two of the NSRS people came to Chattanooga.
20 Then the third time I met with the NSRS was when I took the
21 lead Stone and Webster man to Knoxville so he could meet
22 with them and we spent an afternoon with the Manager of the
23 NSRS and the people involved. We had the people come in so
24 he could kind of understand and to make sure that he was
25 seeing it through their eyes as well as the others.

RJM

1 So I think I had those three in that immediate
2 time frame in terms of what you might call a meeting on
3 those three occasions.

4 MR. ROBINSON: At what point in time did it kind
5 of fall to you the responsibility for gather the various
6 technical responses?

7 MR. MULLIN: I am kind of vague on that because,
8 as I say, when I got the letter, it was an Appendix B letter
9 and I just considered, hey, whatever we do it's kind of my
10 job to kind of pull it together.

11 I think there were some discussions as to what
12 we were doing and the approach we were taking. I don't
13 remember anyone ever saying do this, this and this. I can
14 remember some discussions about schedule in terms of a need
15 like in the mid-January time frame that we really needed to
16 kind of get that thing pulled together and get a response
17 out. I can remember that kind of direction, if you will.

18 MR. ROBINSON: Who was giving that direction?

19 MR. MULLIN: I think I had a conversation with
20 Chuck Mason after one of that middle NSRS meeting, and I think
21 there was a sense of urgency because it was an important
22 matter, and I guess we were probably a week or so beyond the
23 initial deadline that NRC had asked for. I knew we had an
24 extension, but I'm not sure how long it was.

25 I think I was feeling a need to get a response

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1 out at that particular time, and we had a discussion of what
2 the status was and what the process was and there was some
3 emphasis on schedule at that meeting.

4 That is my only recollection of my getting some
5 direction or strong direction. The meetings I had initially
6 with NSRS that Mr. Cottle was in and Mr. Brown was in and
7 the TVA attorney was in and the licensing folks, people knew
8 what was going on.

9 The meeting we had after the Board meeting about
10 mid-January ---

11 MR. ROBINSON: Down in Chattanooga?

12 MR. MULLIN: Yes, and those same people were
13 involved. Mr. Sullivan was involved and Mr. ^{Wagner} Hager, and I
14 think Mr. Cottle and Mr. Brown were there, and they were the
15 people who were preparing the responses, you know, helping
16 to prepare the responses, and worked by and large at that
17 time for either Mr. Cottle or Mr. Brown.

18 So it was kind of what you might say -- there
19 was knowledge of the process, and I don't know that anyone
20 ever said do this, this and this. We probably talked about
21 how we would go about determining whether we were in
22 compliance or not and determining about addressing each of
23 the concerns, and I don't know that anyone ever said do it
24 this way.

25 MR. ROBINSON: Is it fair to say that you kind of

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1 assumed as QA Manager the responsibility of pulling that
2 stuff together?

3 MR. MULLIN: I think it probably is because I
4 couldn't imagine -- I just imagine it would have logically
5 fallen to me if I had waited. So I think I just assumed that
6 responsibility, at least that is my recollection.

7 MR. ROBINSON: Were you asked, Bob, to concur
8 with the final March 20th cover letter to the technical
9 review?

10 MR. MULLIN: I don't think I was asked to concur.
11 I believe that I was given a copy of the letter and had an
12 opportunity to concur or object. I may have even made some
13 -- you know, I may have made some verbal suggestions about
14 the letter.

15 As I recall, part of the process that they had
16 set up at that time was to get people to sign off on the
17 individual responses, and I think I might have endorsed one
18 or two of the individual responses that one of the
19 operations people at Watts Bar had a role ⁱⁿ just as kind of
20 his supervisor.

21 I don't think I formally signed off on a
22 concurrent ^{CE} sheet on the response. I think I had an
23 opportunity, and at that time I was no longer the Director,
24 but I certainly had an opportunity to see the drafts and to
25 voice a concern. I probably indicated an informal or de

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1 facta concurrence, but not a formal concurrence.

2 MR. ROBINSON: Who was pulling that letter
3 together? Who was organizing that letter?

4 MR. MULLIN: I think at that stage, in the final
5 stage it's probably the licensing folks. You know, when you
6 get to the stage where you are about to send something to
7 NRC the licensing folks had a major role in it, and I
8 suspect Mr. Kelly, who was then Director of QA, had a major
9 role in the letter and probably some others that were close
10 to Mr. White. I don't really know, but it just seemed that
11 the licensing and QA were heavily involved.

12 MR. ROBINSON: In the early stages when you were
13 still the QA Manager, were there early drafts that you
14 reviewed when you were still the QA Manager?

15 MR. MULLIN: Yes, there were drafts. Well, the
16 drafts, how they came about, there were drafts prepared at
17 the initial meeting to try and understand the NSRS
18 viewpoint.

19 MR. ROBINSON: This was the initial meeting in
20 the NSRS spaces in Knoxville?

21 MR. MULLIN: Yes, sir. We pulled together a
22 draft, and my thought was if we could pull together a
23 response that both organizations could concur in, it would
24 be a good way to resolve the issue, and what we talked about
25 that day was we talked about -- I remember we asked

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1 questions, are there any things going on right now that
2 should require construction work at Watts Bar to stop, you
3 know, and the answer was no.

4 MR. ROBINSON: NSRS said no?

5 MR. MULLIN: Yes, and I think I've probably got
6 that in my notes where either Mike Harrison or Kermit Whitt
7 said no, there is nothing going on right now.

8 We came up with a letter, you know, we shared
9 responses and shared interactions and talked about the
10 corrective actions that were underway in the various areas
11 and asked questions like that, is there anything Mr. Cottle
12 ^{should do} ~~do~~ or is there anything we need to know or should we stop
13 work in any areas.

14 After talking all morning, or at least most of
15 the morning, we tried to put our thoughts on paper in the
16 form of a response to the Commission's letter and had I
17 think essentially reached a consensus with the people in the
18 room who included Sauer and Harrison and Whitt.

19 They then went out of the room and called Watts
20 Bar and talked with some of their people at Watts Bar or
21 talked with the QTC people, and then came back in and said,
22 well, they cited one or two areas where they thought some
23 things were going on, some specific things were going on
24 that perhaps in their mind were not in compliance and the
25 work was continuing.

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1 I forget what those were. They might have been
2 like, for instance, material traceability might have been
3 one of them. Neither the letter or the consensus appealed to
4 ^{the people at Watts Bar} ~~them~~. Anyway, the meeting concluded without a consensus.

5 Getting back to your question, and there were
6 other versions of that letter that evolved. Kermit came back
7 with a couple of revisions, Kermit Whitt did, and I think
8 Willie Brown had a suggestion which emphasized that a lot of
9 the areas were being addressed to ⁱⁿ the employee concerns
10 program which was something near and dear to his heart.

11 So there were some drafts in that early stage. I
12 don't know that they bear a great resemblance to what went
13 out on March 20.

14 MR. ROBINSON: Kermit submitted some proposed
15 drafts of the letter?

16 MR. MULLIN: Kermit's people at that meeting
17 wrote the draft at that meeting.

18 MR. ROBINSON: And did they supply any subsequent
19 drafts?

20 MR. MULLIN: They did, yes.

21 MR. ROBINSON: Were those coming to you?

22 MR. MULLIN: They were going to various people. I
23 think Kermit gave me -- I think I got copies of all of them.
24 Kermit in that Board meeting handed me -- I believe in the
25 Board meeting -- handed me a suggested revision.

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1 MR. ROBINSON: Why did Kelly take over for you
2 you as QA Manager?

3 MR. MULLIN: Well, I'll tell you my best
4 understanding. I think when Admiral White came in he
5 perceived that QA was a major problem area. From my
6 perspective we had done well the year and a half or so I had
7 had it. He was setting up a new system where they were going
8 to bring design, construction and operations all under one
9 QA program for implementation and direction, and I think
10 wanted someone that had kind of grown up in that area and
11 that was maybe a nationally known person, and he brought in
12 Mr. Kelly who headed up QA for Stone and Webster and sat on
13 their Board of Directors.

14 He brought in Jim Huston as his assistant who
15 also had a lot of strong QA background. So he brought in
16 those two people, and I understood. It was an area that NRC
17 had been ping-pong on us for years and it was an area that I
18 think we had to show some major change or move in if we were
19 going to get things straightened out.

20 He told me, and I had grown up in the nuclear
21 fuel area, and he said he was going to pull all those
22 branches and staff together and wanted me to manage that.
23 His thrust seemed to be let's put people in areas where they
24 have experience and knowledge and have done a good job.
25 Let's put them in charge of those areas.

Jim

1 I was probably selected for the QA job because I
2 had done a good job in the fuel area as a manager, and I
3 think I did a good job in the QA area, but that's my
4 understanding of why Mr. White made the change and I agree
5 with it.

6 MR. ROBINSON: Was White telling you this
7 directly, or was Mr. ^EWagner telling you this? Who told you
8 that you would ~~not~~ be the Manager of Fuel?

9 Mr. White and Mr. ^EWagner both together told me
10 that.

11 MR. ROBINSON: Do you think that the final
12 version of the cover letter, the March 20th letter, is
13 misleading in any way as far as what the true picture is
14 with Appendix B at TVA?

15 MR. MULLIN: I don't. As I recall that letter, I
16 don't.

17 MR. ROBINSON: Are you aware of any strategy
18 meetings by any of the Stone and Webster people or any
19 contractors or TVA people as to the response to that letter,
20 and I'm talking about strategy meetings as opposed to just
21 preparation meetings, if you understand what I'm saying.

22 MR. MULLIN: Well, I think what I'm generally
23 aware of or vaguely aware of is this fits kind of in an
24 intermediate category. I think there were some discussions
25 as to how do you respond to this question, you know, what

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1 does the question mean. As I said before, I don't think it
2 was a very good question. I think it was a hard question to
3 respond to. I think there were some questions about, you
4 know, has that question ever been asked before, and what are
5 the legal precedents.

6 It was all in the sense of, hey, we have got to
7 respond honestly and correctly because it is a serious
8 matter and it was going to be the Admiral's first sworn
9 statement, as I recall. I wasn't involved in any strategy
10 meeting, but just the general sense of concern and inside
11 conversations that I heard were along those lines, what does
12 the question mean, how do we respond to it and how do we
13 phrase that response. It was a sense of making sure it was
14 correct and honest as opposed to strategy in the negative
15 sense.

16 MR. ROBINSON: In the side conversations where
17 you got this sense of importance, who were you having some
18 of these side conversations with or who did you overhear?

19 MR. MULLIN: Well, I can remember being in a
20 conversation once where they were talking about some of the
21 legal questions and probably there were licensing people
22 involved with that question or similar issues had come up on
23 other dockets. That is the type of thing I mentioned, and
24 how do those people, you know, how did those people respond
25 and what did that response mean and that type of thing in

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1 terms of the legal licensing aspects of the question, which
2 is understandable I thought.

3 MR. ROBINSON: Who were some of the major
4 licensing people involved in those conversations?

5 MR. MULLIN: I wasn't involved in a meeting or
6 anything, but I think probably Dick Gridley and maybe some
7 of our legal people.

8 MR. ROBINSON: Are you aware of any outside legal
9 advise^c being given in the preparation of that letter?

10 MR. MULLIN: Not directly, no.

11 MR. ROBINSON: Indirectly?

12 MR. MULLIN: Indirectly I had the impression that
13 there^w as some outside consultation, yes.

14 MR. ROBINSON: Do you know where from?

15 MR. MULLIN: No, sir, I don't.

16 MR. REINHART: Where did the indirect information
17 come from from the outside legal counsel? You said you had
18 that idea indirectly.

19 MR. MULLIN: I just had the impression that
20 they may have in looking at where the question had been
21 asked before or had it been asked on similar dockets before
22 that there may have been outside counsel that participated
23 in proceedings or something, but that is kind of a vague
24 impression, and again it wasn't a formal meeting that I was
25 involved in.

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1 It was a topic of conversation periodically
2 during this period, the Appendix B response and the status
3 to it. I don't know that for a fact that there ^{was} ~~was~~ outside
4 people, but as I say, it was my impression that they may
5 have thought there were outside people that had experience.

6 MR. ROBINSON: Do you think that the technical
7 reviews that were conducted both by your appropriate
8 contacts in the areas of concern and by NSRS were thorough
9 and detailed and in depth enough to adequately address ---

10 MR. MULLIN: And by NSRS ---

11 MR. ROBINSON: Well, the technical reviews. I
12 mean obviously NSRS must have done some type of their own
13 technical review to come up with the perceptions.

14 MR. MULLIN: Well, I can't really speak for NSRS.
15 I know in the meetings that we had, the initial meeting they
16 had there was some things they said they couldn't agree to
17 wording until they checked with QTC. So I'm not sure how
18 much work they were doing and how much QTC was doing, and I
19 don't really want to judge their work.

20 With respect to the work TVA was doing, yes, I
21 do feel there was adequate technical review there. As I said
22 before, in many areas there were programs, fairly intensive
23 programs underway that had a lot of technical work that had
24 been done and corrective actions started, but I really can't
25 speak for NSRS. I think generally those folks were capable

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1 people.

2 MR. ROBINSON: Other than the contracts, Stone
3 and Webster verification or independent reviews of the
4 technical aspects, where there any TVA evaluations of the
5 technical work that was done?

6 MR. MULLIN: There were people ~~like people~~
7 coordinating. Mr. Brown had people helping him pull it
8 together who were overseeing I'm sure like Keith Warren was
9 overseeing what the construction people were saying. Bill
10 Cottle I believe had someone, too, at Watts Bar that was
11 kind of acting as a focal point.

12 I think after when we were at the stage where we
13 were pulling the substantive information together with the
14 background information together to substantiate the
15 responses we had made, my people on one or two occasions
16 looked at that data.

17 MR. ROBINSON: Who were your people?

18 MR. MULLIN: Tom Burdette and Ray Newby had
19 looked at information that was pulled together.

20 MR. ROBINSON: As a little bit of an aside, who
21 is your immediate supervisor right now, Bob?

22 MR. MULLIN: His name is Cloin Robertson.

23 MR. ROBINSON: Did you make him aware that you
24 were coming to the NRC to be interviewed?

25 MR. MULLIN: Yes. He was on the phone with Dan

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1 and me yesterday.

2 MR. ROBINSON: Did he discuss with you what you
3 would be saying to us in any way?

4 MR. MULLIN: No. His only advice was to try to
5 make it down here today or cancel the trip tomorrow, or
6 something. He was on a call I believe when you and Gridley
7 talked, but he did not talk about — I don't think he has
8 any knowledge or any significant knowledge of the Appendix B
9 issue.

10 MR. ROBINSON: Did anyone else that was involved
11 in the Appendix B issue have any recent conversations with
12 you about if the NRC or OI asks you about Appendix B ---

13 MR. MULLIN: No. I don't think anyone else
14 besides Mr. Robertson even knows I'm here today frankly.

15 MR. ROBINSON: Okay.

16 MR. MURPHY: Let's take a short break, a little
17 recess. It's 11 o'clock.

18 We will take a short 10-minute break or so.

19 (Recess taken.)

20 MR. MURPHY: Let's go back on the record. It's 12
21 minutes after 11.

22 Mr. Mullin, I would like to go over a couple of
23 issues, one, the presentation before the Board.

24 MR. MULLIN: Yes.

25 MR. MURPHY: Had the Board members asked you your

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1 opinion prior to or after the presentation by Bob Sauer if
2 you felt from a QA ^{perspective (?)} you were in compliance with Appendix B?

3 MR. MULLIN: No.

4 MR. MURPHY: Did any of the line managers at that
5 meeting question Mr. Sauer's contention that you were or
6 were not in compliance with Appendix B?

7 MR. MULLIN: I think there was some very minor
8 question or discussion, but it was not significant that I
9 recall. I don't recall it as being uncomfortable for Mr.
10 Sauer. He might have been concerned about coming in and
11 making that presentation. There probably were some few
12 questions in my recollection, but I don't really recall what
13 they were and who asked them.

14 MR. MURPHY: Do you recall Director Freeman
15 telling Bob Sauer that he did not have to defend his
16 position on Appendix B at least on a couple of occasions?

17 MR. MULLIN: During that meeting?

18 MR. MURPHY: Yes.

19 MR. MULLIN: I think I remember maybe he said
20 that once. That's my recollection.

21 MR. MURPHY: Do you think this resulted from
22 questions asked by the various line managers at the meeting?

23 MR. MULLIN: No, I don't think so. I'm not really
24 sure. To me, as I recall it, it was his way of trying to put
25 Mr. Sauer at ease. I don't know that it resulted from any

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1 questions asked by line managers because, as I said earlier,
2 I don't think there were any real strong questions asked at
3 that meeting. I really don't.

4 MR. MURPHY: Would you have thought that the
5 Board members might have come away with the opinion that
6 there was a difference of opinion between what Mr. Sauer
7 felt and what the line managers in the QA organization felt?

8 MR. MULLIN: They could have, yes. The line
9 managers in TVA you mean?

10 MR. MURPHY: Yes, sir.

11 MR. MULLIN: Yes, I think they probably could
12 have come away with a difference of opinion. I think they
13 may have gone in there knowing there was a difference of
14 opinion.

15 MR. MURPHY: Why would that be?

16 MR. MULLIN: I don't know. I would just assume
17 that there were conversations back and forth between the
18 upper level managers, but I'm not sure.

19 MR. MURPHY: You said that your initial effort
20 was completed on the technical reviews sometime in
21 mid-January 1986 and that this was reviewed by Mr. Sullivan
22 and Mr. Kelly and then at that point in time it was a
23 general consensus amongst those folks that you were in
24 compliance with Appendix B?

25 MR. MULLIN: At that stage, yes.

Em

1 MR. MURPHY: Did it ever change?

2 MR. MULLIN: No, not to my knowledge.

3 MR. MURPHY: Did you say that you were given
4 additional information and data periodically from NSRS?

5 MR. MULLIN: Well, I think we received some
6 information from NSRS shortly before that meeting you just
7 mentioned with Mr. ^{Kelly} ~~White~~ and Mr. Sullivan that we factored
8 into that initial development of positions.

9 I think subsequent to that, you know, about the
10 time we were developing positions they were also adding
11 additional information on at least one or two areas, and
12 then later in that month they had compiled kind of a matrix
13 of, you know, for this concern as supported by these
14 particular employee concerns. So there was kind of a, not a
15 continuum of information flowing in, but it continued to
16 come. It was a little bit like a moving target. There was no
17 point in time where they said, hey, this is our concern and
18 we ^{well} ~~are~~ trying to kind of look at things as they come in and
19 see if there was anything new or alarming in the
20 information.

21 MR. MURPHY: Did Mr. Whitt ever come to you and
22 present you with a stack of documentation, say three to four
23 inches? I wouldn't swear on the three to four inches, but a
24 stack of documents which said this was in support of NSRS's
25 perceptions?

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1 MR. MULLIN: He gave me things during the course
2 of that period. I don't ever remember anything being very
3 thick.

4 MR. MURPHY: Let's determine what is very thick
5 in your mind.

6 MR. MULLIN: Three to four inches.

7 MR. MURPHY: Three to four inches? Did he ever do
8 that?

9 MR. MULLIN: No, not to my knowledge. Now there
10 are NSRS reports that probably supports some of these and I
11 looked at some of those. I have access to those from within
12 my own staff. I don't think Mr. Whitt ever gave me anything
13 approaching that. It's a matter of many pages as opposed to
14 inches.

15 MR. MURPHY: Did Mr. Whitt generally support the
16 NSRS's perceptions in your mind or was he hesitant? Do you
17 know?

18 MR. MULLIN: I think he was hesitant.

19 MR. MURPHY: Hesitant?

20 MR. MULLIN: Yes.

21 MR. MURPHY: At any point in time did Mr. Whitt
22 come to you and suggest that he supported NSRS's
23 perceptions?

24 MR. MULLIN: At that meeting that we had in
25 Chattanooga, that intermediate meeting, in a subsequent

1 call, Mr. Whitt indicated to me that ^{for} the areas that we had
2 described as having corrective actions ongoing ~~were~~ that
3 that was a sound quality assurance type of response in his
4 mind.

5 They did have two areas that I think were still
6 -- after that middle meeting in Chattanooga, and I think
7 they had to do with loads on embedded plates I believe and
8 material traceability supports. Those were two that they
9 were still developing information on after that meeting in
10 Chattanooga. My recollection is that Mr. Whitt told me on
11 the phone that all the others they considered the actions we
12 had underway had adequately, at least in his mind, and
13 perhaps in Mr. Harrison's mind had adequately resolved their
14 concerns.

15 Now I don't know that he ever was speaking for
16 Mr. Sauer or the other gentlemen, I think Kermit had his own
17 opinions and the members of that ^{Nuclear Safety Review Staff} ~~Board~~ seemed to be fairly
18 independent in terms of their opinions and stating them. It
19 wasn't kind of a rigidly managed type of situation.

20 His opinions I valued because he was manager of
21 the ^{Staff} ~~Board~~, but that did not necessarily mean that they
22 represented the opinions of everyone beneath him.

23 MR. MURPHY: Did you ever hear the suggestion
24 from NSRS personnel that what had happened in this case, as
25 you referred to it, is that the responses to their

Ball

1 perceptions to the same people who historically had been the
2 problem at TVA?

3 MR. MULLIN: Say that again?

4 MR. MURPHY: Let me rephrase that.

5 You asked the line organization to respond to
6 the perceptions identified by TVA.

7 MR. MULLIN: Yes.

8 MR. MURPHY: Did you ever hear the NSRS employees
9 say that they thought that was wrong because what you are
10 doing is asking the same people who have created the
11 problem to respond to this type of problem?

12 MR. MULLIN: I don't recall that I ever did.

13 MR. MURPHY: When you refer matters like that to
14 a line organization, did you in your wildest dreams expect a
15 line manager to come back and say that there is a big
16 problem in this area?

17 MR. MULLIN: Definitely I would.

18 MR. MURPHY: You would have expected that?

19 MR. MULLIN: Given the fact that problems were
20 already known in some of these areas, and given the fact
21 that it was a very serious letter that we were responding
22 to, I would definitely expect them -- I would not expect
23 them to put themselves on the line if they didn't believe
24 what they were saying. They had nothing to gain by doing so
25 really.

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1 MR. MURPHY: Did they have anything to lose by
2 saying that they are right and I'm wrong and my program is
3 screwed up?

4 MR. MULLIN: Did they have anything to lose by
5 saying that?

6 MR. MURPHY: Like their jobs.

7 MR. MULLIN: I need to explain. These necessarily
8 weren't people that were responsible for those programs
9 historically, like let me take the instrumentation area. The
10 fellow that was put in charge of that, Gary Curtis, he was
11 brought in to fix it. He was the one that was Project
12 Manager for fixing that. Gary had nothing to lose by, and in
13 fact everything to gain by saying this, this and this is
14 wrong, because he would be saying up front what he had to
15 fix.

16 I can't say in all of these areas, but in many
17 of these areas it wasn't necessarily that people had a
18 vested interest, and I think the same is true in the
19 electrical area and in the welding area. If people were
20 there to identify and fix the problems as opposed to, you
21 know, the people who were working on them as opposed to -- I
22 can't speak categorically for every area like that, but I
23 definitely have the opinion that if people were brought in
24 and assigned to fix things, they weren't always the same
25 folks that had been there when the problems occurred by any

RJM