



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES CONFIRMATORY ORDER TO SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued a Confirmatory Order to the Tennessee Valley Authority's Sequoyah nuclear power plant as part of a settlement agreement involving a contract security sergeant who falsified a form at the plant. The NRC Office of Investigations concluded that the sergeant deliberately falsified an equipment inventory form, and caused TVA to be in apparent violation of NRC regulations.

TVA requested the alternative dispute resolution process to resolve differences with the NRC concerning the apparent violations and to discuss corrective actions. The ADR process uses a neutral mediator with no decision-making authority to assist the NRC and its licensees in coming to an agreement.

As part of the settlement agreement, TVA has agreed to a number of corrective actions and enhancements related to security equipment inventory and promotion of internal programs for resolution of issues or deficiencies not only at Sequoyah but also at TVA's Browns Ferry and Watts Bar nuclear plants.

TVA also committed to assess the effectiveness of corrective actions and enhancements in a recent Security Independent Evaluation, and will factor those results into its corrective action program. In consideration of the commitments, the NRC will not propose a civil penalty, issue a Notice of Violation or take other enforcement action on these matters. The NRC will, however, evaluate adherence to the commitments during future inspections.

In a letter to TVA, the NRC noted that after becoming aware of the falsification issue, "TVA conducted an investigation into the matter, performed immediate inventory verification of related security equipment and confirmed the accuracy of related inventory forms, implemented the use of 'clear view' magazines fleet-wide to improve the accuracy and efficiency of ammunition inventories, and took disciplinary action as appropriate."

In addition, TVA has notified the NRC that it intends to terminate its security contract and will begin moving to a TVA security force in early 2009 at all of its nuclear facilities. The NRC did not require that change as part of the agreement and confirmatory order.

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