

Indian Point 3
Nuclear Power Plant
P.O. Box 215
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Robert J. Barrett
Site Executive Officer

February 18, 1999
IPN-99-020

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTENTION: Document Control Desk
Washington, DC 20555

SUBJECT: Indian Point 3 (IP3) Nuclear Power Plant
Docket No. 50-286
Reply to Notice of Violation 50-286 / 98-009-02

REFERENCE: NRC Inspection Report 50-286 / 98-009 and Notice of Violation,
John F. Rogge to Robert J. Barrett, dated January 21, 1999.

Dear Sir:

This letter provides, in Attachment 1, the Authority's response to the violation documented in the referenced letter. The Authority agrees with the violation and has taken, or is taking, appropriate corrective actions.

Your letter accompanying the violation expresses concern that the Authority missed an earlier opportunity to identify and address the deficiency, and that corrective actions were untimely. Your letter also states that the violation is one of several in which corrective actions were untimely or causal analysis was inadequate for issues classified at a lower priority in our corrective action process. Finally, your letter requests that the Authority address corrective steps to be taken to avoid further violations of the corrective action program.

The Authority agrees with these concerns. Although we believe that, overall, our corrective action program is adequate; we too have noted, in certain cases, weaknesses in implementation of the program. We have previously examined our program procedures, expectations, and implementation thereof. As a result, we are taking several steps to improve timeliness and quality of analysis in the implementation of our corrective action process:

- IP3 senior management will reinforce expectations to IP3 department managers to emphasize the importance of the corrective action program to IP3's operation. Furthermore, IP3 management will reaffirm to all departments the need to improve the timeliness associated with the program in the evaluation itself, extent of condition reviews, and corrective actions.

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- The Authority is planning several enhancements to the corrective action program. These include formalizing the Deviation Event Report Review Committee roles and responsibilities, and upgrading evaluator training and qualification.
- Indicators are being developed which will monitor the corrective action program timeliness and quality of evaluations.

The Authority is making no new commitments in this letter.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Ken Peters at (914) 736-8029.

Very truly yours,


Robert J. Barrett
Site Executive Officer
IP3 Nuclear Power Plant

cc: Regional Administrator, Region I
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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Reply to Notice of Violation 50-286/98-009-02

Violation 98-009-02

10 CFR Part 50, Criterion XVI, Corrective Action, requires in part that measures shall be established to assure that conditions adverse to quality are promptly identified and corrected. Further, in the case of significant conditions adverse to quality, the measures shall assure the cause of the condition is determined and corrective action taken to preclude repetition.

Contrary to the above, from August 19, 1997 to November 18, 1998, NYPA failed to take prompt and adequate corrective action for a condition adverse to quality. Specifically, the potential for performing the 10 CFR Appendix J, type C leakage tests under inappropriate system conditions was identified in a deviation event report (DER) dated August 19, 1997. However, NYPA failed to conduct sufficient reviews to identify and resolve similar problems with containment isolation valve leakage testing until an isolation valve failure occurred on November 18, 1998. As a result of this failure, a plant shutdown was required to conduct retesting of 88 valves which may have been improperly leak tested. One of the 88 containment isolation valves (AC-MOV-797, "Component Cooling Water to Reactor Coolant Pump Seals") had leakage well above procedural acceptance criteria.

This is a Severity Level IV violation. (Supplement 1)

Response to Violation 98-009-02

The Authority agrees with this violation.

Reason for Violation

The specific causes of the violation were:

1. The response to the August 1997 DER (97-02106) was inadequate. The extent of condition review was not performed adequately for failure of valve CH-MOV-250B. The responsible person believed that the inadequate test pressure was relative only to the test set-up for the cited valve.
2. Untimely completion of action to review past operability of the containment isolation valves deprived us of an opportunity to find the problem in 1997.

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The Action Commitment Tracking System (ACTS) item tracking this review was originally due September 4, 1997. It was extended several times, and had not been completed at the time of this event.

3. Classification of DER 97-2106 as Level C may have contributed to the inadequate response. The DER should have been classified Level B, which would have increased its prioritization.

Corrective Actions Taken or To Be Taken

1. The responsible individual was counseled on the failure to provide an adequate extent of condition review for the August 1997 DER event.
2. The Authority performed an extent of condition for this event which reviewed other DER evaluations done by the responsible person, and found no additional problems.
3. A number of actions have been identified and are planned to improve the effectiveness of our DER process. These include formalizing DER Review Committee roles and responsibilities, reinforcing expectations to department managers to emphasize the importance of corrective action to IP3's operation, development of improved performance indicators, and upgrading evaluator training and qualification.

Date when Full Compliance Was Achieved

Compliance with respect to containment isolation valve leak testing was achieved on November 20, 1998 when the plant was placed in a condition in which the valve was not required to be operable. As discussed in Licensee Event Reports 1998-009 and 1999-001, certain valves were subsequently repaired and tested, a Technical Specification amendment was submitted for other specified valves, and the plant was returned to service.