



Nebraska Public Power District

Always there when you need us

NLS2011050

June 2, 2011

10 CFR 2.201

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Subject: Reply to Notice of Violation 2011002-02; EA-2011-090
Cooper Nuclear Station, Docket No. 50-298, DPR-46

- References:**
1. Letter to Brian J. O'Grady (Nebraska Public Power District) from Vince Gaddy (U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission) dated May 3, 2011, "Cooper Nuclear Station - NRC Integrated Inspection Report Number 05000298/2011002 and Notice of Violation"
 2. Letter to Brian J. O'Grady (Nebraska Public Power District) from Vince Gaddy (U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission) dated February 10, 2010 [sic], "Cooper Nuclear Station - NRC Integrated Inspection Report Number 05000298/2010005 and Notice of Violation"
 3. Letter to Stewart B. Minahan (Nebraska Public Power District) from Geoffrey B. Miller (U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission) dated April 30, 2009, "Cooper Nuclear Station - NRC Integrated Inspection Report 05000298/2009002"
 4. Letter to Stewart B. Minahan (Nebraska Public Power District) from Geoffrey B. Miller (U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission) dated February 9, 2009, "Cooper Nuclear Station - NRC Integrated Inspection Report 05000298/2008005"

Dear Sir or Madam:

The purpose of this correspondence is to provide Nebraska Public Power District's (NPPD) reply to Notice of Violation (NOV) 2011002-02 in accordance with 10 CFR 2.201. By letter dated May 3, 2011, (Reference 1), the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) cited NPPD for being in violation of NRC requirements. The NOV is concerned with Cooper Nuclear Station (CNS) failing to appropriately assess and manage the risk associated with planned maintenance activities, per 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), and to restore compliance within a reasonable time after non-cited violations were identified in previous inspection reports (References 2, 3, and 4).

COOPER NUCLEAR STATION

P.O. Box 98 / Brownville, NE 68321-0098

Telephone: (402) 825-3811 / **Fax:** (402) 825-5211

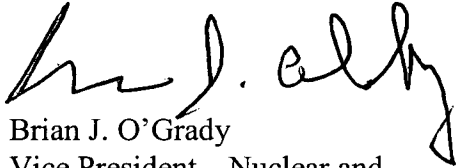
www.nppd.com

*IED1
NRR*

NPPD recognizes the importance of its responsibilities with respect to identifying and correcting significant deficient conditions and accepts the violation. As discussed in the attachment to this letter, NPPD has taken prompt action to return to compliance with 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4) and has developed corrective actions to prevent recurrence of the violation.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact David Van Der Kamp, Licensing Manager, at (402) 825-2904.

Sincerely,



Brian J. O'Grady
Vice President – Nuclear and
Chief Nuclear Officer

/bk

Attachment

cc: Regional Administrator w/ attachment
USNRC - Region IV

Cooper Project Manager w/ attachment
USNRC - NRR Project Directorate IV-1

Senior Resident Inspector w/ attachment
USNRC - CNS

NPG Distribution w/ attachment

CNS Records w/ attachment

REPLY TO NOTICE OF VIOLATION 2011002-02; EA-2011-090
COOPER NUCLEAR STATION
DOCKET NO. 50-298, DPR-46

During Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) inspection activities conducted January 1, 2011, through March 24, 2011, a violation of NRC requirements was identified. The violation and Nebraska Public Power District's (NPPD) reply are set forth below:

Restatement of the Violation

"Title 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4), "Requirements for Monitoring the Effectiveness of Maintenance at Nuclear Power Plants," requires, in part, that before performing maintenance activities the licensee shall assess and manage the increase in risk that may result from the proposed maintenance activities.

Contrary to the above, from November 26, 2008 through February 17, 2011 work control and operations personnel failed to adequately access [*sic*] and manage the increase in risk associated with maintenance activities. Specifically, qualitative assessments of maintenance activities in or near the electrical switchyard and offsite power components were not included in the on-line risk assessment.

This violation is associated with a Green Significance Determination Process finding."

Background

On November 26, 2008, during a Yellow risk window for emergency diesel generator (EDG) 2 scheduled maintenance, personnel involved with movement of the materials for construction of the independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) heavy haul load road were maneuvering in close proximity to the 161 kilovolt (kV) transmission line tower to the startup transformer. The NRC resident inspector questioned the impact the movement of machinery in this area had on overall risk to the station. This event was documented in Reference 4 as a Green non-cited violation of 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4) for Cooper Nuclear Station's (CNS) failure to assess and manage the risk of planned maintenance activities. Specifically, CNS failed to include planned heavy equipment operations in the vicinity of the startup transformer transmission lines in the associated risk assessment.

On January 29, 2009, during a Yellow risk window for EDG-1 scheduled maintenance, the NRC resident inspector observed a water drilling truck operating within one foot of one of the 345 kV transmission line towers. This truck was performing water drilling activities for the ISFSI project inside the protected area. This event was documented in Reference 3 as a Green non-cited violation of 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4) for failure to assess and manage the risk of planned maintenance activities. Specifically, CNS failed to include planned heavy equipment operations in the vicinity of the 345 kV transmission lines from the main power transformers in the associated risk assessment.

For the November 2008 and January 2009 events, the apparent cause evaluations performed were too narrowly focused on correction of the condition and addressing the physical barriers needed to prevent vehicular contact with electrical transmission towers. The evaluations did not address the emerging programmatic problems for failure to assess and manage the risk of the activities.

On December 7, 2010, the NRC resident inspector questioned the presence of a crane with the boom extended in the CNS 345 kV switchyard coincident with the station in a Yellow risk window for EDG-2 planned maintenance. The crane was being utilized by personnel for planned work on the Mark T. Moore transmission line. This event was documented in Reference 2 as a Green non-cited violation of 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4) for CNS's failure to adequately assess and manage risk associated with a planned maintenance activity; specifically, for use of a crane in the station's electrical switchyard.

CNS took prompt corrective action to implement additional controls for use of the crane during this maintenance activity and subsequently documented the qualitative risk assessment in the work order. The apparent cause evaluation for this event, and the associated corrective actions, focused on the failure to adequately assess and manage risk during maintenance in the switchyard; however, these actions were not completed until February 20 and March 2, 2011.

On February 17, 2011, during ongoing maintenance on the Mark T. Moore transmission line, and while the station was in a Yellow risk window for high pressure coolant injection system maintenance, the NRC resident inspector questioned whether the switchyard work, which involved use of heavy equipment, was considered in the station's on-line risk assessment. The inspector determined the risk assessment was inadequate in that it had not assessed all plant transient initiating events and the activity was not included in the overall on-line plant risk. CNS took prompt corrective action to re-perform the qualitative risk assessment to consider and document other plant initiating events. This event was documented in Reference 1 as a Green cited violation of 10 CFR 50.65(a)(4).

In Reference 1, the NRC discussed NPPD's failure to adequately assess and manage the increase in risk associated with maintenance activities from November 26, 2008, through February 17, 2011. Specifically, qualitative assessments of maintenance activities in or near the electrical switchyard and offsite power components at CNS were not included in the on-line risk assessment. Because NPPD failed to restore compliance within a reasonable time after the November 2008 event, this is a cited violation in accordance with the NRC Enforcement Policy, Section 2.3.2, Non-Cited Violation.

Reason for Violation

NPPD accepts the cited violation.

CNS performed a root cause evaluation for the Notice of Violation. The cause was identified as a lack of staff understanding of what is required for a quality risk assessment. This resulted in inadequate program design and implementation, as well as inadequate training for personnel implementing the program.

Corrective Steps Taken and Results Achieved

NPPD has taken the following actions:

1. Installed signage and protective barriers around electrical transmission towers at CNS. This action will reduce probability of vehicular contact with these towers and requires Operations to be notified before planned work occurs near the towers within the protected area. This will allow CNS to properly assess and manage risk to the station.
2. Revised the station procedure for control of switchyard and transformer yard activities to provide guidance for documenting qualitative risk assessments and describing impact of planned work to off-site power source availability and generation. This procedure revision has been implemented.
3. Revised the station procedure for on-line risk assessment to improve guidance for performing qualitative risk assessments and assessing activities against initiating events, and to require that risk management actions be included for high risk activities and switchyard maintenance. This procedure revision has been implemented.
4. Implemented a standing order which requires Operations management approval of switchyard work at CNS. This action will ensure adequate risk analysis is performed and documented for the activities until corrective actions to prevent recurrence are completed.
5. Reviewed senior reactor operator approved work orders for maintenance activities in or near the electrical switchyard and offsite power components. This action verified qualitative risk assessments have been performed and documented for applicable approved work orders.

These actions are complete.

Corrective Steps That Will Be Taken to Avoid Further Violations

To prevent recurrence of the violation, NPPD will take the following actions:

1. Review, and revise as necessary, the station procedures for schedule risk assessment and outage shutdown safety to ensure compliance with the guidelines contained in NUMARC 93-01, Revision 3, Section 11.

NPPD will complete this action by June 30, 2011.

2. Develop and provide training to senior reactor operators, shift technical engineers, work week directors, switchyard system engineers and direct supervision, corporate switchyard system engineers, and risk management engineers on performing risk management assessments.

NPPD will complete this action by September 30, 2011.

3. Develop and implement a training qualification for performance of risk management assessments that support work order approval and schedule approval.

NPPD will complete this action by September 30, 2011.

As an interim measure, until the corrective actions to prevent recurrence can be fully implemented, NPPD will present tailgate training to senior reactor operators, shift technical engineers, and work week directors, on qualitative and blended risk assessments to include internal and external operating experience.

Date When Full Compliance Will Be Achieved

NPPD is currently in full compliance.

Correspondence Number: NLS2011050

The following table identifies those actions committed to by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) in this document. Any other actions discussed in the submittal represent intended or planned actions by NPPD. They are described for information only and are not regulatory commitments. Please notify the Licensing Manager at Cooper Nuclear Station of any questions regarding this document or any associated regulatory commitments.

COMMITMENT	COMMITMENT NUMBER	COMMITTED DATE OR OUTAGE
NPPD will review, and revise as necessary, station procedures for schedule risk assessment and outage shutdown safety to ensure compliance with the guidelines contained in NUMARC 93-01, Revision 3, Section 11.	NLS2011050-01	June 30, 2011
NPPD will develop and provide training to senior reactor operators, shift technical engineers, work week directors, switchyard system engineers and direct supervision, corporate switchyard system engineers, and risk management engineers on performing risk management assessments.	NLS2011050-02	September 30, 2011
NPPD will develop and implement a training qualification for performance of risk management assessments that support work order approval and schedule approval.	NLS2011050-03	September 30, 2011