

DUKE POWER COMPANY
Oconee Unit 3

Report Number: RO-287/79-12

Report Date: December 7, 1979

Occurrence Date: November 7, 1979

Facility: Oconee 3, Seneca, South Carolina

Identification of Occurrence: Low Pressure Service Water Pump Inoperable

Conditions Prior to Occurrence: 74% Full Power

Description of Occurrence:

At 0947 on November 7, 1979, during a routine inspection of the Turbine Building basement, excessive packing leakage from Oconee 3 low pressure service water (LPSW) pump 3B was observed. LPSW pump 3A was started and LPSW pump 3B was secured. The pump was declared inoperable at 1022. It was discovered that the pump's outboard shaft sleeve had worked loose, causing the packing leak. The pump was repaired by 1900 and at 2200, after successful completion of a performance test, was declared operable.

Apparent Cause of Occurrence:

During investigation of the packing leakage, it was determined that the pump's outboard shaft sleeve had worked loose, slid out of the stuffing box, and caused the packing to fail. No damage to the sleeve which could have allowed it to work loose was observed. It is considered possible that, since two separate crews were involved in rebuilding the pump in June, 1979, verification of the tightness of the sleeve's locking nut may have been overlooked.

Analysis of Occurrence:

Although Oconee Nuclear Station Technical Specification 3.3.1(b) requires that two LPSW pumps be operable, Technical Specification 3.3.5 permits one pump to be removed from service for up to 24 hours, since only one pump is required during normal operation, and emergency requirements are less than those under normal conditions. LPSW pump 3B was out of service for less than twelve hours, and during that time LPSW pump 3A was operable and fully capable of fulfilling the requirements of the LPSW system. However, this incident constituted operation in a degraded mode permitted by a limiting condition for operation and must therefore be reported pursuant to Technical Specification 6.6.2.1.b(2), although it was of no significance with respect to safe operation, and the health and safety of the public were not affected.

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SUBJECT: LER 79-012/03L-0: on 791107, during routine insp of turbine building basement, excessive packing leakage from low pressure svc water pump 3B discovered. Caused by possible improper tightening of lock nut. Pump repaired & in service.

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