



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

September 14, 1995

MEMORANDUM TO: William T. Russell, Director, NRR

FROM: James M. Taylor *James M. Taylor*  
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF OCONEE EVENT REVIEW TEAM

On March 8, 1995, Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) President Mr. Zack Pate, informed me that he believed an NRC Resident Inspector exceeded his regulatory authority by taking over operational control of the recovery actions associated with the steam generator dryout event at Oconee Unit 3, following a reactor trip on August 10, 1994. In response to INPO's concerns, I directed the staff to conduct an independent review of the reactor trip and the circumstances surrounding the subsequent recovery actions. I informed Mr. Pate of the results of this review in a letter dated July 10, 1995.

Recently, Mr. Pate informed me that INPO has continuing concerns related to this event. Although the staff found that the Resident Inspector did not exceed his authority, INPO questioned the thoroughness of the staff's review. Mr. Pate also expressed concern about the technical and procedural issues associated with the delay in the licensee's recovery actions. INPO believes that these issues are not well understood and appear sufficiently complex to warrant further evaluation by both the NRC and INPO.

In light of these concerns, you are directed to form an event review team led by Roy P. Zimmerman, Associate Director for Projects, to conduct an indepth evaluation of the licensee's and the staff's activities related to this event. The event review team should include other NRC staff, as you deem appropriate, and provide for participation by one or two INPO personnel and a senior licensee manager (preferably from a B&W plant). Mr. Zimmerman should coordinate directly with Mr. Bill Kindley, INPO's VP for Government Relations, to facilitate the participation of the INPO and industry representatives. While this event and the associated issues do not meet the threshold for an Incident Investigation Team (IIT), the event review team should follow Section 1.7 of the IIT procedure with respect to participation by industry organizations.

In carrying out this assignment, the team should be guided by the following:

1. Maintain independence and objectivity and avoid undue influence by previous staff actions and findings.
2. Gain a clear understanding of INPO's concerns. Review and evaluate all relevant information, including the INPO SER on this event, and hold discussions with INPO representatives.

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3. INPO indicated that the delay in the licensee's actions to recover the dry steam generator raises technical and procedural issues. Pursue this matter with INPO and the licensee to understand the basis for these concerns.
4. Gain a clear understanding of the staff's actions related to this event. Evaluate the results of the staff's review of the reactor trip and the subsequent recovery actions. Hold discussions with those staff involved with the review.
5. Determine the appropriateness of the Resident Inspector's actions following the reactor trip. Interview whatever staff and licensee personnel you deem necessary; however, you should specifically include the plant operators involved in the recovery actions.
6. Upon completion of the team's review, recommend what if any additional actions the agency should take regarding this event, including the rationale for the recommendations. If there are any lessons learned from the team's review, identify them. The team should submit its report to the Executive Director for Operations (EDO).
7. Provide periodic briefings to me of your activities.
8. Maintain records of the information you collect and document the results of interviews to the extent necessary to capture salient information.
9. This assignment should begin as soon as practical and be conducted expeditiously.

cc: S. Ebnetter, RII  
 Z. Pate, INPO

OIG  
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