

FEBRUARY 1 1978

Docket No. 50-220

Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation  
ATTN: Mr. Donald P. Dise  
Vice President - Engineering  
300 Erie Boulevard West  
Syracuse, New York 13202

Gentlemen:

RE: NINE MILE POINT

In a report titled "Evaluation of Incidents of Primary Coolant Release From Operating Boiling Water Reactors" issued by the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission on October 30, 1972, the regulatory staff reported the results of a study of eight incidents, involving the unintentional discharge of primary coolant through safety and relief valves during reactor operation, which occurred at BWR facilities during 1970 through 1972. One of the staff recommendations resulting from this study was that the BWR feedwater control systems should be designed to automatically control reactor vessel water level during anticipated transients without flooding of the main steam line or the lines to other safety-related equipment. The following suggested performance objectives for the BWR feedwater control system, which included considerations of both maximum and minimum water levels to be maintained during anticipated transients, were identified by the staff:

1. The maximum water level attained should not initiate isolation of any safety feature, such as the high pressure coolant injection system, or disable any system or component required for the orderly shutdown of the reactor, and
2. the minimum water level attained should not require the activation of any safety system.

A recent event at a foreign reactor facility has demonstrated that, under certain reactor vessel high water level conditions, damage may result to safety/safety-relief valves and other equipment located inside the containment.

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The installation of an automatic feedwater pump trip function on reactor vessel high water level for most operating BWR-3 and BWR-4 facilities has satisfied the intent of the staff's recommendations in this regard. However, we believe that several of the older operating BWR facilities, including your facility, have not yet incorporated this design feature, i.e., automatic feedwater pump trip on high reactor vessel water level.

Accordingly, we request that you inform us, within 30 days of receipt of this letter, of your intentions to install such a protective feature and provide us with your schedule for installation. If you do not plan to install such a feature, we request that you provide us with your basis for not doing so.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

George Lear, Chief  
 Operating Reactors Branch #3  
 Division of Operating Reactors

cc: See next page

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