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SUBJECT: Special rept:on 941211,main vent gaseous effluent monitoring sys declared inoperable due to poor peak centroid resolution.New detector installed & calibr in process & automatic liquid nitrogen (LN2) level control sys repaired.

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NIAGARA MOHAWK

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December 28, 1994
NMP2L 1517

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

RE: Nine Mile Point Unit 2
Docket No. 50-410
NPF-69

Subject: ***Special Report***

Gentlemen:

In accordance with Nine Mile Point Unit 2 (NMP2) Technical Specification (TS) Table 3.3.7.10-1, "Radioactive Gaseous Effluent Monitoring Instrumentation," ACTION 139b, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation is submitting this Special Report concerning the inoperability of the Main Radwaste/Reactor Building Ventilation Gaseous Effluent Monitoring System (GEMS).

Event Description

On December 11, 1994, at 1127 hours, with the reactor mode switch in the "COLD SHUTDOWN" position (Operational Condition 4) and the plant in a forced outage due to increased drywell leakage, the Main Vent GEMS Noble Gas Station was declared inoperable due to poor peak centroid resolution. Peak centroid resolution and check source response evaluation is performed daily per procedure N2-CSP-RMS-D313. During performance of this activity, resolution was outside of the procedure's acceptance criteria. Initial inspection at the detector location identified that the detector cryostat liquid nitrogen (LN_2) level was extremely low, allowing detector temperature to increase, which in turn adversely impacted detector resolution.

Immediate corrective action included conducting a thermal cycle of the detector in an attempt to restore the peak centroid resolution. While cooling the detector during the thermal cycle, the detector head began to ice, indicating that the detector vacuum had been compromised.

The detector was subsequently replaced and is being returned to the factory for repair. A calibration using a spare detector is currently in progress to restore the Main Vent GEMS to operable status.

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On December 15, 1994, at 1127 hours, the Main Vent GEMS had been inoperable for 72 hours, necessitating the submittal of this Special Report in accordance with NMP2 TS Table 3.3.7.10-1, ACTION 139b.

Cause of Event

The failure of the Main Vent GEMS Noble Gas Station is directly attributable to inadequate frequency of manually filling the detector's LN_2 cryostat. Degradation of the LN_2 Auto Fill and Control System necessitated the need for manually filling the detector cryostat. The root cause of the event was managerial methods in that the consequences of manually filling the system were not adequately evaluated. If proper evaluation of the fill requirement trend was performed, it would have been recognized that fill frequency needed to be increased from once per week to every three days.

Corrective Actions

1. A new detector was installed and calibration is currently in progress. The detector is functioning, and when the calibration is successfully completed, the system will be restored to service and the NRC Resident Inspector will be notified.

2. The automatic LN_2 Level Control System has been repaired and returned to service.

3. Changes will be made to appropriate procedures incorporating precautions associated with manually filling of the LN_2 cryostat.

Very truly yours,

K A Dahlberg

Kim A. Dahlberg
Plant Manager - Unit 2

KAD/AFZ/lmc

xc: Regional Administrator, Region I
Mr. B. S. Norris, Senior Resident Inspector