

December 12, 1996

Mr. B. Ralph Sylvia
Executive Vice President Generation Business
Group and Chief Nuclear Officer
Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
Nuclear Learning Center
450 Lake Road
Oswego, New York 13126

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NOS. 50-220/96-11 AND 50-410/96-11

Dear Mr. Sylvia:

This report transmits the findings of safety inspections conducted by NRC inspectors at the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2, from September 8 through October 19, 1996. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with Mr. R. Abbott, Vice President & General Manager, Nuclear Generation, and other members of your staff. We are providing one integrated report for the inspections conducted during this period in order to better consolidate our inspection findings into a consistent regulatory message and to more clearly communicate how these findings may reflect a change in your performance.

During this period, your staff operated both units safely. We noted that the increased staffing of the outage shift managers for the Unit 2 refueling outage contributed to a better focus by the shift managers and provided for excellent coordination of activities. Overall, performance in the radiation protection area was overall considered good; the organization was well staffed and radiation worker practices appeared to have improved. The Unit 2 refueling activities were generally well performed; but a fuel bundle was mispositioned due to multiple personnel errors, poor oversight by the on-site supervisor, and over-reliance on others to identify problems. However, your corrective actions were adequate and no further problems occurred during the remainder of the core reload.

We are also concerned about the amount of debris found in the Unit 2 suppression pool and downcomers during the outage. We consider this a significant issue because of the potential for the debris to clog the emergency core cooling pump suction strainers. It appears that the suppression pool cleaning during the previous refueling outage was inadequate. Since this issue was identified at the end of this inspection period, we have determined this issue is unresolved pending further NRC review.

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In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosures, and your response will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Your cooperation with us is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:

Lawrence T. Doerflein, Chief
Projects Branch 1
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos. 50-220, 50-410
License Nos. DPR-63, NPF-69

Enclosures: NRC Inspection Report Nos. 50-220/96-11 and 50-410/96-11

cc w/enclosure:

R. Abbott, Vice President & General Manager - Nuclear
C. Terry, Vice President- Safety Assessment and Support
M. McCormick, Vice President - Nuclear Engineering
N. Rademacher, Unit 1 Plant Manager
J. Conway, Unit 2 Plant Manager
D. Wolniak, Manager, Licensing
J. Warden, New York Consumer Protection Branch
G. Wilson, Senior Attorney
M. Wetterhahn, Winston and Strawn
J. Rettberg, New York State Electric and Gas Corporation
Director, Electric Division, Department of Public Service, State of New York
C. Donaldson, Esquire, Assistant Attorney General, New York Department of Law
J. Vinquist, MATS, Inc.
P. Eddy, Power Division, Department of Public Service, State of New York
F. Valentino, President, New York State Energy Research
and Development Authority
J. Spath, Program Director, New York State Energy Research
and Development Authority



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