

May 16, 1997

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, NY 13126

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NOS. 50-220/97-02 AND 50-410/97-02  
AND NOTICE OF VIOLATION

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 February 23 through April 5, 1997. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with members of your staff. We are providing one integrated report for all the inspections conducted during this period, in order to better consolidate our findings into a consistent regulatory message and more clearly communicate how these findings may reflect a change in your performance.

During this period, your staff operated both units safely. We noted good management oversight of activities associated with the Unit 1 outage. The performance by the NMPC staff, and contractors, during the outage indicated that the focus was on safety. In general, the nondestructive examination and inservice inspection programs were found to be well implemented. Also, the radiological protection program at Unit 1 was characterized by thorough planning and control of work to minimize unnecessary exposures. However, we noted a poor work practice regarding a packing leak on a Unit 1 spent fuel pool cooling pump. In addition, the failure of the auxiliary operators to inform the shift supervision of the leak represents a significant weakness in their oversight of plant operations.

Based on the results of this inspection, the NRC has determined that violations of NRC requirements occurred. The violations are cited in the enclosed Notice of Violation (Notice), and the circumstances surrounding the violations are described in the enclosed report. Specifically, the violations involved (1) the failure to perform response time testing of the Unit 2 high pressure core spray system actuation signals as required by the technical specifications, and (2) the failure to properly implement the procedure for identification and review of control room deficiencies at Unit 2. We note that the second violation is another example of failing to implement the program requirements at Nine Mile over the past year. Previous examples include the control of high radiation areas at Unit 1, the procedure change evaluation process at Unit 2, and the emergency temporary modification process at Unit 2. You are required to respond to this letter and should follow the instructions specified in the enclosed Notice when preparing your response. The NRC will use your response, in part, to determine whether further enforcement action is necessary to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.



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Mr. B. Ralph Sylvia

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

We appreciate your cooperation.

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:

1. Notice of Violation
2. NRC Inspection Report Nos. 50-220/97-02 and 50-410/97-02

cc w/enclosures:

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



Mr. B. Ralph Sylvia

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