

July 30, 1997

Mr. B. Ralph Sylvia
Executive Vice President
and Chief Nuclear Officer
Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation (NMPC)
Nuclear Learning Center
450 Lake Road
Oswego, NY 13126

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NOS. 50-220/97-04 AND 50-410/97-04

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 May 18 through June 28, 1997. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with you, and members of your staff. We are providing one integrated report for all the inspections conducted during this period in order to better consolidate our inspection 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. Both units performed reactor shutdowns and startups without incident. The identification of an abnormally high temperature within the high pressure core spray switchgear room, by a Unit 2 operator, was an example of good awareness to plant conditions. However, the failure on the part of a Unit 2 non-licensed operator to properly implement the procedure for the backwash of the reactor water cleanup filters was another example of inattention to detail. The fire protection program was found to be appropriately maintained; administrative controls, equipment conditions, and training provided to the fire brigade members were also found to be good.

The Unit 1 licensed operator requalification training program was implemented acceptably, but several noteworthy weaknesses were identified. The written examination level of difficulty was low, and the reliability of the control rod position indication system in the simulator was degraded to the extent that it could negatively affect training. Also, we noted that Unit 1 did not have specific procedural guidance for determining that the reactor is shutdown under all conditions; although Unit 2 does have specific guidance. Based on the nature of these concerns, we request that you respond, in writing, within 30 days from the date of this letter, stating your position on these concerns and any planned corrective action. In addition, you should plan on meeting with us to discuss your response after it is provided to us.

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PDR ADOCK 05000220
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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, and your response will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Your cooperation with us is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by:
T. A. Moslak, for

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

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

Enclosure: NRC Inspection Report Nos. 50-220/97-04 and 50-410/97-04

cc w/enclosure:

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C. Terry, Vice President- Safety Assessment and Support
J. Conway, Vice President - Nuclear Engineering
K. Dahlberg, Vice President - Nuclear Operations
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