

November 4, 1997

EA No. 97-228

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

**SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT NOS. 50-220/97-09 AND 50-410/97-09
AND NOTICE OF VIOLATION**

Dear Mr. Sylvia:

This letter transmits the report of an inspection conducted by Mr. Leonard Cheung and others at Nine Mile Point Units 1 and 2 from August 4 through 29, 1997. The inspection was focused on areas important to public health and safety, and consisted of a review of various engineering activities including: (1) susceptibility of certain reactor water cleanup system valves to fire-induced short circuits; (2) plant design changes; (3) environmental qualification of safety-related equipment; (4) control of the plant configurations and design bases; (5) the motor-operated valve program; (6) staff training and qualification; and, (7) corrective actions for NRC-identified technical issues. At the conclusion of the inspection, the preliminary findings were discussed with you and other members of your staff.

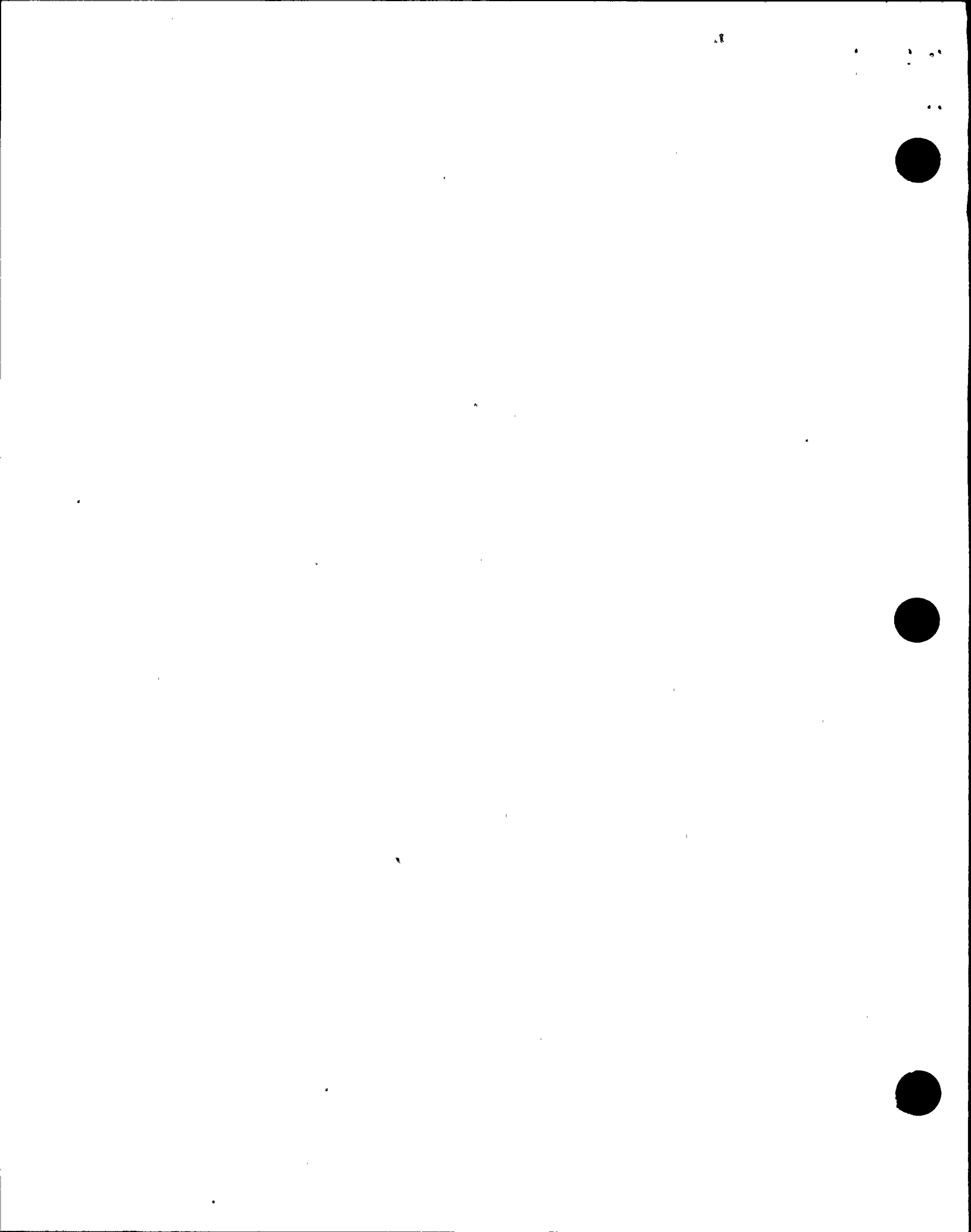
Based on the results of this inspection, the inspectors determined that: (1) your immediate corrective actions following the identification that 40 isolation valves were susceptible to fire-induced hot shorts were appropriate; (2) the design change for the replacement of recirculation system sample containment isolation valves was ineffective in resolving the problem for which it was implemented but other design change packages and their safety evaluations were acceptable; (3) Unit 2 design engineers were cognizant of the technical issues supporting the preparations for the next refueling outage; and (4) Unit 1 service water system design basis document was comprehensive and well prepared.

The NRC is closing its review of your program implemented under Generic Letter 89-10, "Safety-Related Motor-Operated Valve Testing and Surveillance." Closure is based on the commitments contained in your letter dated September 30, 1997, including: (1) obtain additional industry information or analyses to bolster valve factor assumptions pertaining to valve groups G and K at Unit 1 and VO3, VO6, and GLO3a at Unit 2, (2) replace the motor-actuators on feedwater isolation valves at Unit 1 during the next refueling outage,

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(3) develop plans for verifying butterfly valve manufacturer's torque prediction methodologies at both units, (4) modify the gear sets of two main steam drain valves at Unit 2 during the next refueling outage, and (5) evaluate the need to perform margin enhancement modifications to a Unit 1 reactor water cleanup system isolation valve. We also understand that you will notify the NRC in writing when commitments (1), (3), and (5) have been completed. Please contact us promptly if your understanding of these commitments differs from those discussed in this report.

Two violations of NRC requirements were identified during this inspection period. The violations concerned lack of instructions or procedures for the conduct of certain environmental qualification (EQ) program activities, and failure to review and approve certain EQ program documents. These violations are cited in the enclosed Notice of Violation (Notice) and a detailed description of the violations are included in the enclosed report. Please note that 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.

In addition, an apparent violation of the Fire Protection Program provisions of the Unit 2 operating license was identified. The violation involved your staff's identification of a potential for fire-induced spurious operation of twenty pairs of air-operated valves in the reactor water cleanup system. Inadvertent valve operation was of particular concern due to the potential for overpressurization of low pressure piping from the reactor coolant system. The apparent violation is undergoing further NRC review. We will inform you of the results of that review at a later date.

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.

Your cooperation with us is appreciated.

Sincerely,

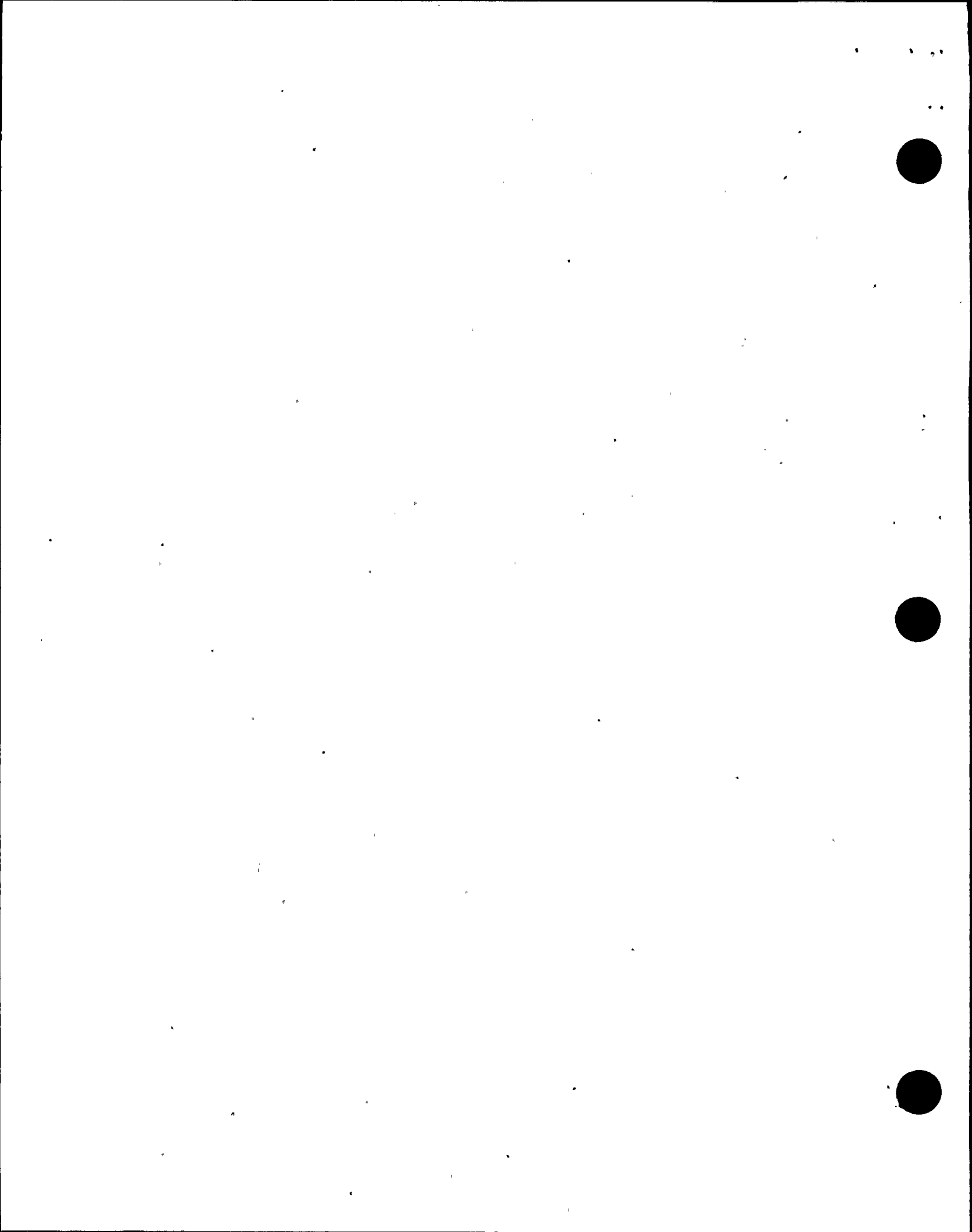
ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

James T. Wiggins, Director
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket Nos: 50-220, 50-410

Enclosures:

1. Notice of Violation
2. NRC Region I Inspection Report Nos. 50-220/97-09 and 50-410/97-09



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cc w/encl:

R. Abbott, Vice President & General Manager - Nuclear
C. Terry, Vice President- Safety Assessment and Support
J. Conway, Vice President - Nuclear Engineering
K. Dahlberg, Vice President - Nuclear Operations
D. Wolniak, Manager, Licensing
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G. Wilson, Senior Attorney
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J. Spath, Program Director, New York State Energy Research
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DATE	10/20/97	10/24/97		10/1/97 <i>dated 10/1/97</i>	10/4/97	10/23/97

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