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CONTE, R.J.    Region 1 (Post 820201)  
RECIP.NAME    RECIPIENT AFFILIATION  
MUELLER, J.H.    Niagara Mohawk Power Corp.

SUBJECT: Forwards insp repts 50-220/98-13 & 50-410/98-13 on  
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August 11, 1998

Mr. John H. Mueller  
Chief Nuclear Officer  
Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation  
Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station  
Operations Building, 2nd Floor  
P.O. Box 63  
Lycoming, NY 13093

SUBJECT: NRC SPECIAL INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-220/98-13 and 50-410/98-13

Dear Mr. Mueller:

This report transmits the findings of a special inspection conducted by NRC inspectors at the Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station, Units 1 and 2, from July 20-24, 1998. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with members of your staff.

This inspection was conducted in response to several personnel errors, by Unit 1 operators, that occurred during 1998. These errors included, in part, a licensed Senior Reactor Operator briefly leaving the control room, the failure to properly position a valve in the containment spray system following testing and the failure to implement required Technical Specification actions following the failure of a raw water/containment spray isolation valve. Several causes contributed to these deficiencies including weak self checking, poor independent verification, and an inattention to detail by plant operators. Other causes contributing to the decline in operations performance overall were a lack of clearly documented management standards and expectations and the failure by operations management to hold operator's accountable.

The inspectors found that your oversight and self assessment programs had identified this decline in operations performance. Your staff had appropriately responded to these findings and had recently implemented several corrective actions to improve your organization. These improvements included the establishment of a permanent operations management team and the establishment of clearly documented standards and expectations for the operations staff. The inspectors found that the operator's were aware of the new standards and expectations and were appropriately implementing them. However, these changes have only recently been established and additional time is necessary to validate the success of these improvements on reducing the personnel error rate and improving overall performance.

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PDR ADOCK 05000220  
G PDR

IEO 1/1



Mr. John H. Mueller

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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.

Sincerely,

**ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:**

Richard J Conte, Chief  
Operator Licensing and Human  
Performance Branch  
Division of Reactor Safety

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

Enclosures: NRC Inspection Report No. 50-220/98-13 and 50-410/98-13

cc w/enclosure:

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Mr. John H. Mueller

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