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SUBJECT: Special Rept 3-SR-87-009:on 871211,radiation monitoring unit inoperable for greater than 72 h.

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192-00331-JGH/JEM
January 7, 1988

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NRC Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Dear Sirs:

Subject: Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (PVNGS)
Unit 3
Docket No. STN 50-530 (License No. NPF-74)
Special Report 3-SR-87-009
File: 88-020-404

Attached please find Special Report 3-SR-87-009 prepared and submitted pursuant to Technical Specification 3.3.3.8 Action 42b and 6.9.2. This report discusses a Radiation Monitoring Unit Inoperable for Greater than 72 hours.

If you have any questions, please contact J. E. Malik, (Acting) Compliance Lead at (602) 393-3527.

Very truly yours,

J. G. Haynes
Vice President
Nuclear Production

JGH/JEM/kj

Attachment

cc: O. M. DeMichele (all w/a)
E. E. Van Brunt, Jr.
J. B. Martin
J. R. Ball
E. A. Licitra
A. C. Gehr
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PALO VERDE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION

Radiation Monitoring Unit Inoperable for Greater Than 72 Hours

License No. NPF-74

Docket No. STN 50-530

Special Report No. 3-SR-87-009

This Special Report is being submitted pursuant to Technical Specification 3.3.3.8 ACTION 42b and Technical Specification 6.9.2 to report an event in which a Radioactive Gaseous Effluent Monitor (Plant Vent High Range Gaseous Activity Monitor RU-144) was inoperable for greater than 72 hours. The 72 hour limit for returning to operability was exceeded at approximately 2130 MST on December 11, 1987. Pursuant to Technical Specification 3.3.3.8 ACTION 42a the Preplanned Alternate Sampling Program was initiated to monitor the Plant Vent System.

At 2130 MST on December 8, 1987, Palo Verde Unit 3 was in Mode 1 (POWER OPERATION) when the Plant Vent System Radioactive Gaseous Effluent Monitors, low range RU-143 and high range RU-144, were declared inoperable due to RU-144 spuriously becoming active and inactive. Monitors RU-143 and RU-144 work as a pair with RU-143 being the low range monitor and RU-144 being the high range monitor. Normal configuration consists of RU-143 operating and RU-144 in standby. When RU-143 reaches a predetermined point, RU-144 starts and RU-143 goes to standby. RU-144 is provided for tracking of postulated accident releases.

An authorized work document was issued to troubleshoot the monitors. A recorder was connected to RU-143 to monitor the communication between the monitors. Miscommunication between the monitors could result in spurious actuation of RU-144. The recorder results were reviewed after approximately 24 hours with no indications of spurious signals being generated.

"On line" testing was conducted on RU-143 to verify that the monitor would, under prescribed conditions, activate and deactivate RU-144. These tests were completed with satisfactory results. Additional testing was also conducted on RU-144. During the test of RU-144 the "Equipment Failure" light illuminated and the "Pump On" indication was not received. In the configuration used during the test, RU-143 secured and RU-144 activated, the circulation pump is required to be in operation. The pump circulates sample air from the plant vent through the monitor and returns the sample to the vent. The pump and RU-144 were verified to be operating properly. It was also verified that the indications received were erroneous. Additionally the auxiliary contacts on the pump breaker, which generates the "Pump On" signal, were verified to be operating properly. Further troubleshooting identified an isolation board in RU-144 which was not functioning properly.

The board was replaced and the indications were verified to be properly operating. The spurious activation of RU-144 has not recurred and is believed to have been caused by the isolation board. An Engineering Evaluation Request has been submitted to perform an analysis on RU-144.

A retest of RU-144 was satisfactorily completed. After the completion of appropriate surveillance tests RU-143 and RU-144 were declared operable at 0420 MST on December 12, 1987. The monitors were out of service for approximately 78 hours and 50 minutes.