

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION V

Report Nos. 50-528/88-36, 50-529/88-34, and 50-530/88-34

Docket Nos. 50-528, 50-529 and 50-530

License Nos. NPF-41, NPF-51 and NPF-74

Licensee: Arizona Nuclear Power Project
P. O. Box 52034
Phoenix, Arizona 85072-2034

Facility Name: Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Stations, Units 1, 2, and 3

Inspection at: Palo Verde Site, Wintersburg, Arizona and In-Office

Inspection Conducted: August 10, 1988 - October 6, 1988

Inspectors:

A. D. Johnson

A. D. Johnson, Enforcement Officer

10/14/88

Date Signed

M. Cillis

M. Cillis, Senior Radiation Specialist

10/14/88

Date Signed

Approved by:

H. S. North

H. S. North, Acting Chief, Facilities
Radiological Protection Section

10/14/88

Date Signed

Summary:

Inspection during the period of August 11, 1988 - October 6, 1988
(Report Nos. 50-528/88-36, 50-529/88-34, and 50-530/88-34)

Areas Inspected: Special unannounced inspection by two regionally based inspectors of Allegation No. RV-88-A-0020. Inspection procedures 30703 and 92701 were addressed.

Results: On June 13, 1988, a former facility worker requested an NRC inspection pursuant to 10 CFR 19.16. The individual alleged that licensee employees had falsified surveillance records involving radiation measuring equipment. This inspection found most circumstances presented by the alleger to be correct however additional information and recognition that most of the documents described were not required by NRC regulations resulted in findings that the falsification aspects were unsubstantiated. In the one area addressed, no violations or deviations were identified.



DETAILS

1. Persons Contacted

a. Licensee Staff

- *J. D. Driscoll, Assistant Vice President, Nuclear Production Support
- *W. Quinn, Director, Nuclear Safety and Licensing
- *R. M. Butler, Director, Standards and Technical Support
- *L. G. Papworth, Director, Quality Assurance/Quality Control
- *J. R. Mann, Central Radiation Protection Manager
- *J. M. Sills, Manager, Radiation Protection and Chemistry
- *T. D. Shriver, Compliance Manager
- R. V. Logan, Dosimetry Supervisor
- J. C. Schlag, Supervisor, Radwaste Standards
- T. Haggard, Lead Radiation Protection Technician
- L. Hughes, Central Radiation Protection Technician
- J. B. Steward, Standards Radiation Protection Engineer

b. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

T. J. Polich, Senior Resident Inspector

* Denotes attendance at the August 11, 1988, exit interview.

In addition, the inspectors met and held discussions with other licensee and contractor personnel.

2. Allegation No. RV-88-A-0020

Pursuant to 10 CFR Part 19.16 a former contractor Mr. John Barbre who had worked at the Palo Verde Nuclear Power Station requested an investigation of alleged violations of regulatory requirements regarding radiological working conditions in which he was engaged. Attachment 1

The following are the statements of concerns expressed in the letter and during telephone conversations with Mr. Barbre followed by the inspectors' findings.

Concern (a)

Response checks on I.R.T. portal monitors were allegedly performed on April 1, 1988 by a certain individual. The record of the checks were allegedly false in that the checks were performed on March 31, 1988 and an individual falsely signed the name of the person who performed the check.

Finding (1)

The inspectors examined the record of portal response checks maintained in the calibration laboratory. The record showed that five portal



instruments were checked on March 29, 1988 and one was checked on March 6, 1988. The record also showed the names of three individuals with the same individual performing 4 checks on March 29, 1988. The Laboratory Supervisor explained that this particular record was only a status log for his use to ensure that the work was performed and is not required to be signed by the person doing the work. He added that routinely he will write the individuals name on the checklist after verifying from an individual that the check had been completed.

Conclusion

Except for the dates, the facts of the allegation are true. Since a signature of the individual doing the checks were not required, the allegation of falsification was unsubstantiated.

Finding (2)

The individual who raised this concern stated that he did not report that the required response checks of several PCM's had not been performed as was indicated by the alleger. The individual stated that what he found and reported was that the technicians were not performing a proper alarm check on each of the PCMs 15 detector channels. Additionally, the individual stated that the alarm circuitry for the PCM's are very complex, such that the alarm checks could have been performed and also be easily erased if the alarm were accidentally reset. Thus the information in the PCMs computer memory would be totally or partially destroyed even though a proper alarm check had been performed. The inspection disclosed that personnel performing the alarm checks have been instructed in the proper method for performing the alarm checks. The licensee's representative added that he had noticed an improvement in the technician's ability to perform a proper alarm response check since he brought this observation to the attention of his supervision.

Conclusion

The facts of the allegation was found to be true. The falsification was unsubstantiated.

In addition to the above, during separate discussions with six individuals the inspector inquired as to whether they (1) had ever been requested to or knew of anyone filling in records for work not performed; (2) had ever been requested to sign or know of anyone signing for work performed by another or (3) had ever been requested to or know of records that had been back or forward dated. All of the individuals answers were in the negative.

Concern (b)

A computer system generates "out of tolerance" reports for instruments found to out of calibration. These reports are intended to be provided to the instrument user. The reports are not being provided to the instrument user.



Finding

The licensee representatives explained that normally whenever instruments are out of calibration, the instrument is in need of repair and is obvious to users that the instrument is out of order. The representatives stated that occasionally an instrument is found out of calibration and would not be obvious to users and therefore the procedures will be changed to assure that in those cases users will be so notified.

Conclusion

The allegation was substantiated, however no requirement existed for providing users with "out of tolerance" reports.

Concern (c)

Laundry monitor calibration and operating procedures were violated many times during the past four years.

Finding:

No specific violations were identified. In general, the licensee representatives explained that over the years problems had been encountered at the laundry and as a result survey instrumentation and procedures have been improved.

Conclusion

The allegation was unsubstantiated.

Concern (d)

An individual failed to provide a written expression of radiological concern involving the transfer of highly contaminated material to the Quality Assurance Department as required by procedure.

Finding

Reports of concern are not required pursuant to the licensee written procedure to be sent to the Quality Assurance Department. The inspectors verified that the report was sent to appropriate persons and to the licensee's Document Control Center.

Conclusion

The allegation was unsubstantiated.

Concern (e)

During 1987, Teletector radiation survey instruments could not meet the $\pm 10\%$ acceptance criteria and Lead Technicians signed off calibrations data sheets indicating acceptable performance.



1

Finding

According to licensee representatives difficulty has been experienced with the 2 R/hr range of the Teletector instruments and have been found on occasion to be off as much as 20%. Before releasing the instruments for use the detectors are replaced and rechecked until satisfactory results are obtained. This matter has been directed to the vendor's attention for assistance and resolution of the problem. A review of a sample of records did not reveal that the instruments were returned to service without satisfying the acceptance criteria even though some had been found to be off by as much as 20%.

Conclusion

The allegation was substantiated, however no instruments were returned to service that could not meet the $\pm 10\%$ acceptance criteria.

Concern (f)

The allegation regarding a licensed operator being requested to falsify the date of a surveillance test was addressed on July 11 and 14 with interviews with the licensed operator and the I & C technician.

Finding

According to the licensed operator the issue revolved around the question of equipment operability and after further review and discussion he was convinced the equipment was operable and then signed the surveillance test document.

Conclusion

The allegation was unsubstantiated.

3. Results of Licensee Investigation

On October 6, 1988, the inspectors examined the licensee's investigation results submitted by letter dated September 29, 1988 to the Regional Administrator of Region V, Attachment 2.

The information provided by the licensee was found to be consistent with the inspection findings reported in this report.

4. Exit Interview

The inspectors met with the licensee representative identified in section 1 of this report. The inspectors summarized the scope of the inspection and informed the representatives that the inspection findings would be sent after receipt and review of the licensee's investigative effort related to this matter.



RECEIVED
NRC
REGION V

June 6, 1988

To: USNRC, Region 5
Suite 210
1450 Maria Lane
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

88 JUN 13 All: 14

Attention: Greg Yuhas

From: John Barbre (contractor at PVNGS June 1984 to May 1988)
20119 Henderson, Suite E
Davidson, NC 28036
Phone: 704-892-7542

Subject: Palo Verde

With reference to our telephone conversation of April, 1988.
I feel there is need for an investigation under provisions provided
by 10CFR 19.16.

Early this year I was assisting [REDACTED] an I & C technician.
During casual conversation I learned from him that a Unit 2 operator
(a friend of [REDACTED] was asked by a licensed operator to falsify
and backdate a Surveillance Test that had been performed after
the due date. This incident happened in June or July of 1987.
At that time Unit 2 was going into full operation, and the word
from upper management was (nothing will go wrong). There were
also 3 or 4 other operators involved in the same incident. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] friend questioned and hesitated signing the back dating
of the document. He was then ordered by the same licensed operator
to sign and back date the document. From my conversation with
[REDACTED] His friend (the operator) did sign and back date under
duress of his job. [REDACTED] let it be known to me that he wanted
to report the incident to the NRC but because of his friend's
job, he has hesitated to do so.

On March 31, 1988 a response check was to have been completed
on I.R.T. portal monitors throughout the site. On April 1,
1988 I (John Barbre) was directed to perform the test by [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. I completed the test and reported to [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. At that time [REDACTED] said to me "I will just
mark you down as job done". Several days latter when I was alone
in the callab I looked at the same records and found my name
on the document in [REDACTED] handwriting dated March 31,
1988. (This is not the first time this has happened under [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].

On April 18, 1988 Callab personnel [REDACTED] noticed that some
of the Eberline PCM's had been documented as daily response checked.
Upon reviewing the computer memory he [REDACTED] discovered that the
test had not been performed on several PCM's throughout the site.
[REDACTED] reported his findings to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] then reported
the problems to the managers of each area. Some of the managers
responded in a positive way, other managers didn't really care.
I agree with [REDACTED] in bringing these falsified documents into

ATTACHMENT 1



the open, but I question his motives as he himself had done the same thing on April 1 1988. I would like to note at this time that it was in the recent few months that [redacted] had been promoted to Lead replacing [redacted] who had been promoted to a supervisory position. It has been my observation that the objective throughout the site has been to appease management rather than perform the job properly and in accordance with procedures so that a person can get promoted.

In the 3rd. or 4th. quarter of 1986 [redacted] programmed into the computer an improved instrument tracking system to include an automatic printout of any instrument found to be out of tolerance. the reason for this report was to notify the user. Shortly thereafter [redacted] erased all historical tracking records of instruments and radioactive sources, he felt the computer was to slow. [redacted] many months using the computer for his personal business interests) The computer still generates Out of Tolerance reports but never has one of these reports been given to any of the users. As of my termination at PVNGS there was a stack of the reports on [redacted] desk approximately 2 inches high. Some of the reports have my name on them dating back to October, 1986.

Earlier this year I was approached by the NRC and asked about the RO-2M and because of my talking to the NRC I have since been ostracized. I was told by [redacted] "you cannot talk to the NRC" Several days later I cornered [redacted] about the treatment I was receiving and he told me "I could only give my opinion to the NRC and I could not represent the utility" I said to [redacted] "you gave me the authority to make decisions did you not" [redacted] response was "yes but you can only give your opinion to the NRC and cannot speak for the utility" my response was "I have the right to defend myself to the NRC or anybody else on any work that I perform". [redacted] and [redacted] Walked into the room at that time and the conversation terminated.

The whole history of the RO-2M: [redacted] an RP tech. recently promoted to RP engineer came into the callab in the fall of 1987 and wanted 10 RO-2's modified (RO-2M). At that time I was told by [redacted] the procedure had been written and approved for use of the RO-2M and the instruments must be made now. He explained what he wanted to do I said "that instrument was trouble" I pointed to the trash can and said "thats where the idea belongs" I tried not to get involved with the project but eventually I had to. I was assigned by [redacted] to come up with daily response check parameters. About half of the instruments would work but the performance was very questionable, the only thing I could come up with was a positive instrument response because thay all responded different. so I said "How about a positive instrument response" and everybody agreed that was the solution.

In January of 1988 my girlfriend was laid-off of a job at PVNGS for witch she was hired on a long term bases, then she was replaced the next day. I cannot prove this but I believe it was a way to get to me because of my negitive attitude toward [redacted]



[REDACTED]. I could not be fired because of my knowledge that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Had left Work early many times to play golf and charged the time to the plant, [REDACTED] performed while on the job, [REDACTED] hiring a electronics tech. who happened to be a [REDACTED] instructor and performed [REDACTED] school on the job after his permotion to [REDACTED].

Another of [REDACTED] projects was a modification to the [REDACTED]. Calibration and operating procedures were violated many times on this instrument during my 4 years of employment at PVNGS. The modification got [REDACTED] bonus for saving the utility money, when in fact management knew all along that a replacement instrument was on order. It was just a political move to show upper management that the RP group was cutting costs.

When I was hired at PVNGS I was told to do what ever I was told to do by the utility. I was required to follow the procedures to the letter, and in fact things were not done that way. These people do not practice 100% compliance. The people are scared of there own QA department in fear of not getting a promotion. I was required to go through the chain of command to report problems, I tried and found this does not work, if you want to work at PVNGS again. [REDACTED] told me "because of one contractors actions against the utitilty all contractors are taboo:", [REDACTED] said "we do not have to talk to contractors" Upper management has created a very bad attitude among the workers both inhouse and contract. Another example of this is when the union tried to get in the people were told that the bus service would go away if the union got in. After the union was voted out the bus service was canceled. Then came the van service the people were lied to again. At best the van service was poor, unreliable and dangerous. the parking is so remote that many people have to walk 1/2 mile or more to get to their job. When it rains there is no you can get to your job without having to walk in 1 to 3 inches of water. I was injured on the job about a tear ago and I am not yet healed, when I called in sick nobody cared or told me about reporting an industrial accident, so as not to make waves I returned to work in pain (I still have pain to this day). I was given job assignments I could not perform because of my injury. About the time of the RO-2M incident I was involved in a car accident my Doctor advised me to do light duty only (my doctor was the PVNGS doctor) I was assigned to perform heavy tasks, example move Eberline AMS-3 (175 lbs.), load into pickup truck offload and deliver P-10 Gas bottles. This plant does not care about employee safety at all, and my being ostricized got enhanced. My job assignments got physcialy difficult, and most of the time I was not given a job assignment at all for days, and at one time a week.

I would like a copy of this letter to be sent to the Airizona Corporation Commision (prudency audit). But I do not want to jeopardize the investigation.

John Barbre

