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 STN-50-529 Palo Verde Nuclear Station, Unit 2, Arizona Publi 05000529  
 STN-50-530 Palo Verde Nuclear Station, Unit 3, Arizona Publi 05000530

AUTH.NAME      AUTHOR AFFILIATION  
 PERKINS, K.E.      Region 5 (Post 820201)  
 RECIP.NAME      RECIPIENT AFFILIATION  
 CONWAY, W.F.      Arizona Public Service Co. (formerly Arizona Nuclear Power

SUBJECT: Forwards insp rept 50-528/92-23, 50-529/92-23 & 50-530/92-23  
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UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
REGION V

1450 MARIA LANE  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596-5368

October 8, 1992

Docket Nos. 50-528, 50-529, and 50-530  
License Nos. NPF-41, NPF-51, and NPF-74

Arizona Public Service Company  
P.O. Box 53999, Station 9012  
Phoenix, Arizona 85072-3999

Attention: Mr. W. F. Conway  
Executive Vice President, Nuclear

SUBJECT: NRC SPECIAL INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-528/529/530/92-33

This refers to the special inspection conducted by H. Wong, R. Huey, L. Coblenz, and B. Rogers, on September 14 through 18, 1992. The inspection involved a survey of activities authorized for your Palo Verde facility. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with you and the members of your staff identified in the enclosed report.

This special inspection was unannounced. It was conducted to gain a sense of the perceptions and attitudes of workers at Palo Verde with regard to their ability to raise significant safety issues. The inspection was conducted by interviewing a broad scope of non-supervisory employees selected by the NRC inspectors. The employees selected by the inspectors included both Arizona Public Service Company (APS) direct employees and contractors. We interviewed those employees performing work that appeared to be the most safety-significant. We recognize that we did not interview all work groups at Palo Verde and we make no claim that our survey and interviews were all inclusive.

Based on these interviews, we found that most of the employees (92%) interviewed felt free to raise significant safety issues to their supervisors, higher levels of APS management, the APS Employee Concerns Program (hotline), and the NRC. We found that 6% of those interviewed felt free to raise significant safety issues to their immediate supervisors, but they felt some reluctance to raise issues above their supervisors. Our survey did not identify a consistent set of reasons for these individuals' feelings. The remaining 2% of those interviewed felt some reluctance to raise significant safety concerns to their immediate supervisors.

While these results are not indicative of a widespread problem with reluctance of APS employees to raise significant safety issues to their immediate supervisors or above, they do indicate that the environment at Palo Verde for raising significant safety concerns can be improved. Please advise us of your plans in this regard.

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Q PDR

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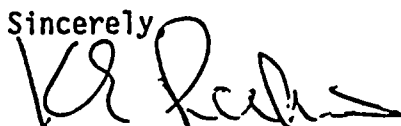
Also, our letter and Notice of Violation and Proposed Imposition of Civil Penalties dated September 30, 1992, required you to address the actions you have taken to assess the extent to which your employees harbor reservations about raising safety concerns, and the actions you have taken to eliminate or minimize those reservations.

Finally, you should be aware that 5 employees who stated that they felt some reluctance to raise significant safety issues to their immediate supervisors or above, further stated that they had experienced retaliation in 1991 and 1992 for raising such issues. The NRC is evaluating each of these five cases to determine whether further action can or should be taken.

In accordance with 10 CFR Part 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and the enclosures will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Should you have any questions concerning this inspection, we will be glad to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,



K. E. Perkins, Jr., Director  
Division of Reactor Safety  
and Projects

Enclosure:

Inspection Report Numbers 50-528/92-33, 50-529/92-33, 50-530/92-33

cc:

Mr. O. Mark DeMichele, APS  
Mr. James M. Levine, APS  
Mr. R. Stevens, APS  
Mr. S. Guthrie, APS  
Mr. E. C. Simpson, APS  
Mr. Thomas R. Bradish, APS  
Mr. Robert W. Page, APS  
Ms. Nancy C. Loftin, Esq., Corporate Secretary & Corporate Counsel, APS  
Mr. Curtis L. Hoskins, El Paso Electric Company  
Mr. James A. Beoletto, Esq., Assistant Counsel, SCE Company  
Mr. Charles B. Brinkman, Combustion Engineering, Inc.  
Mr. Aubrey V. Godwin, Director, Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency  
Chairman, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors  
Mr. Steve M. Olea, Chief Engineer, Arizona Corporation Commission  
Mr. Roy P. Lessey, Jr., Esq., Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld  
Mr. Bradley W. Jones, Esq., Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer and Feld  
Mr. Jack R. Newman, Esq., Newman & Holtzinger P.C.



bcc w/enclosure:  
 Project Inspector  
 Resident Inspector  
 Docket File  
 J. Martin  
 B. Faulkenberry  
 G. Cook

bcc w/o enclosure:  
 M. Smith  
 J. Zollicoffer  
 J. Bianchi

RV:jb *see Attached* *see Attached* *10/8* *HWong* *MBlume*  
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