PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-96-037

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by Region II staff in Atlanta, Georgia on this date.

Facility
Tennessee Valley Authority
Browns Ferry 2
Decatur, Alabama
Dockets: 50-260

Licensee Emergency Classification
Notification of Unusual Event
Alert
Site Area Emergency
General Emergency
X Not Applicable

Subject: BROWNS FERRY UNIT 2 AUTOMATIC REACTOR SCRAM

On May 10, 1996, at approximately 10:25 a.m., (CDT), Browns Ferry Unit 2 experienced a low water level reactor scram from full power. The low reactor water level was due to an unexpected feedwater runback signal generated by the digital feedwater system re-initializing following the entry of new flow response parameters by plant engineering.

The feedwater runback and subsequent decrease in feed flow resulted in a decrease in reactor water level which caused the automatic reactor scram. All rods fully inserted and the High Pressure Coolant Injection (HPCI) system initiated and recovered reactor water level. Minimum reactor water level during the transient was approximately -50 inches. Operators stabilized the unit in Hot Shutdown. All safety systems functioned as expected with the exception of the Reactor Core Isolation Cooling (RCIC) turbine which unexpectedly tripped on high turbine exhaust pressure shortly after the reactor scram occurred. Preliminary investigation indicated that a recently installed turbine exhaust discharge check valve having different characteristics may have allowed a higher initial pressure peak which initiated the tripping of the RCIC turbine at the setpoint of 25 psig. The licensee plans to revise the RCIC high exhaust pressure setpoint to correct the problem. The NRC is reviewing why this problem was not identified during post modification testing of the new RCIC turbine exhaust check valve and why administrative controls for making parameter changes to the digital feedwater system did not prevent the runback.

Currently, the unit is in Cold Shutdown. The licensee decided to bring the unit to Cold Shutdown in order to repair a degraded Recirculation Pump seal. The licensee plans to complete repair activities and restart the unit on May 13, 1996.

The State of Alabama has been informed.

The NRC Resident Inspectors are monitoring the licensee's scram recovery and associated corrective actions.

Contact: Mark S. Lesser
(404)331-0342

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