

NUCLEAR OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL 24, 1984

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The second meeting of the Nuclear Oversight Committee (NOC) of Public Service Electric & Gas Company (PSE&G) was held on March 12, 1984 at the Company's Nuclear Engineering Building and March 13, 1984 at the Salem Plant.

I. Organizational Matters

A. The agenda at both this and the first meeting have been quite crowded. Therefore three steps will be taken:

1. The meetings will be extended (at least for the balance of 1984) from one to two days' duration.
2. NOC will concentrate its efforts in the near future on the Salem reactors, turning to Hope Creek late in the year.
3. Participation and attendance at NOC meetings will be limited to those individuals specifically invited.

B. NOC identified standing agenda items for each future meeting that include:

- o Status of the overall Action Plan
- o Detailed review of selected Action Plan items
- o Station occurrences review
- o Nuclear Review Board items
- o Safety Review Group items
- o NRC semimonthly meeting review
- o Tour of all of the stations

II. Improvement Program

Action Plan activity has increased substantially since the December NOC meeting. The rate of resource utilization has increased to 553 man-days per week for February from 100 man-days per week in December.

To date, 6,000 man-days have been recorded against 12,000 man-days scheduled. Part of the shortfall is due to time spent but not recorded, part is due to lack of staff. Nevertheless, the completion of milestones in the plan is improving, and it is believed that this measure is a better one of progress. Twenty-eight milestones of 34 scheduled to date have been completed. The program was 15 milestones behind in December, 8 behind in January, and 6 behind in the middle of March. It is too early in the process to make a judgement relative to completion of the overall Improvement Program, but by June much more accurate projections should be possible. All Action Plans are currently heading to completion on or before the NRC commitment dates.

As of February, 1, 1984, total staffing for the Nuclear Department was still 300 below the nearly 1,500 required by Budget and the Action Plan. However, the rate at which manpower is increasing parallels the planned curve. While staffing is below projections, during 1983 the Nuclear Department hired 170 people with a total turnover of 47. PSE&G Nuclear attrition is 5% compared to the industry average of 11%.

The personnel staff has been augmented substantially in an earnest effort to correct manpower deficiencies, but it is clear that some unusual and creative additional initiatives will be required. Meanwhile, the Nuclear Department will continue to utilize subcontractors and consultants to fill the gap.

Good progress has been made by the staff on the establishment of Safety Performance Indicators. The NOC reviewed a list of 53 performance indicators that are being developed and how they should be interpreted. NOC will closely review and compare PSE&G's safety performance against other comparable nuclear plants and against industry standards. These data are not yet developed in any great detail.

The NOC received a presentation on an Action Plan relative to Safety Review Management. Three steps of this Action Plan have been completed: 1) review of the PSE&G safety review management process, 2) visits to other utilities to review their safety review organizations, and 3) development of recommendations for improvements. NOC received presentations on 1) and 2) but not on 3) because these had just gone to the V.P. Nuclear for his consideration. This, of course, is an area of great importance to NOC and is expected to be the subject of detailed discussions at the June meeting.

III. Attitudes

Since good morale is essential to safe operation, NOC particularly sought out achievements that are matters of pride to the management and staff. Among these are the successful smooth start-up of Salem Unit No. 2, which required long periods of reactor operation in a range where the band of control is narrow. The operators were able to maintain low-speed turbine operation with no trips and no operator errors, and they feel very proud of the skill and teamwork that was responsible for this technical achievement.

A second area of pride is Health Physics. The NRC inspection in this area was very positive. The NRC noted that radiation protection audits performed by PSE&G were very good and that the efforts to reduce solid rad. waste generation were very good. The Radiation Protection personnel are encouraged by the results of this inspection but recognize that there is still a great deal of work to do.

NOC, since its inception, has been concerned that only if communications with PSE&G management are frank and open will NOC perform a useful function. This is and will continue to be difficult to evaluate, but there were signs at the March meeting that progress is being made in this direction.

In a similar fashion, it is essential that PSE&G management and personnel follow both the letter and the spirit of the NRC regulations. NOC was encouraged by the attitudes of PSE&G management and their efforts to be leaders of the industry in such areas as radiation protection and radioactive waste volume reduction. It is hoped that this standard of excellence will be expanded to more and more areas of safety.