

June 3, 1997

EA No. 97-257

Mr. Leon R. Eliason
President and Chief Nuclear Officer
Public Service Electric and Gas Company
P.O. Box 236
Hancocks Bridge, New Jersey 08038

SUBJECT: SALEM FIRE PROTECTION INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-272; 50-311/97-09

Dear Mr. Eliason:

This refers to the inspection conducted from April 14 - 18, 1997, at Salem Units 1 and 2. The purpose of the inspection was to determine whether activities authorized by the license were conducted safely, and in accordance with NRC requirements. At the exit meeting on April 23, 1997, the findings were discussed with Mr. E. Simpson and other members of your staff identified in the enclosed report.

The inspection was directed toward areas important to public health and safety. The areas examined during this inspection included your corrective actions to satisfy 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix R, Sections III.G., "Fire protection of safe shutdown capability," and alternately III. L., "Alternative and dedicated shutdown capability." Specifically, those areas related to post-fire alternative safe shutdown capability and those plant modifications which installed isolation transfer switches and corrected associated circuit concerns that could have resulted in fire induced circuit failures leading to operability concerns associated with hot shutdown related motor-operated valves. In addition, evaluations were made for closure of previously identified inspection items pertaining to the fire resistive qualification and installation of electrical raceway fire barrier systems and a limited plant tour was conducted to assess the readiness of plant fire protection features.

Based on the results of this inspection, two apparent violations were identified and are being considered for escalated enforcement action in accordance with the "General Statement of Policy and Procedure for NRC Enforcement Actions" (Enforcement Policy), NUREG-1600. The NRC considers these issues to be significant in that they reflect a failure to adequately justify how your design bases were met associated with certain important fire protection features. These violations involved: 1) inadequate post-fire alternative shutdown system design which relied on a significant number of repairs to achieve and maintain hot-standby plant conditions, as discussed in report section F.1; and 2) failure to adequately qualify the installed electrical raceway fire barrier systems, Kaowool, FS-195, and Interam E-50, as required by Section III.G.2.c of Appendix R to 10 CFR Part 50, as discussed in report section F8.2. The circumstances surrounding these apparent violations, the significance of the issues, and the need for lasting and effective corrective action were discussed with members of your staff at the inspection exit meeting. As a result, it may not be necessary to conduct a predecisional enforcement

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conference in order to enable the NRC to make an enforcement decision. Therefore, a Notice of Violation is not presently being issued for these inspection findings. Before the NRC makes its enforcement decision, we are providing you an opportunity to either (1) respond to the apparent violations addressed in this inspection report within 30 days of the date of this letter or (2) request a predecisional enforcement conference. Please contact Mr. W. Ruland at (610) 337-5376 within 7 days of the date of this letter to notify the NRC of your intended response.

Your response should be clearly marked as a "Response to Apparent Violations in Inspection Report Nos. 50-272; 50-311/97-09" and should include for each apparent violation: (1) the reason for the apparent violation, or, if contested, the basis for disputing the apparent violation, (2) the corrective steps that have been taken and the results achieved, (3) the corrective steps that will be taken to avoid further violations, and (4) the date when full compliance will be achieved. Your response should be submitted under oath or affirmation and may reference or include previous docketed correspondence, if the correspondence adequately addresses the required response. If an adequate response is not received within the time specified or an extension of time has not been granted by the NRC, the NRC will proceed with its enforcement decision or schedule a predecisional enforcement conference.

In addition, please be advised that the number and characterization of apparent violations described in the enclosed inspection report may change as a result of further NRC review. You will be advised by separate correspondence of the results of our deliberations on this matter.

We acknowledge the corrective actions you have taken and committed to complete as described in your letter, dated December 2, 1996, to ensure electrical independence of the post-fire alternative safe shutdown functions from the control room and to eliminate the need to perform post-fire safe shutdown repairs by installing isolation transfer switches for the required alternative shutdown equipment and components. Further, we acknowledge your commitment to maintain fire watches as compensatory measures in those areas where electrical recovery fire barrier systems qualification is indeterminate, as described in your letter, dated May 19, 1997. We agree that these stated measures address our short-term concerns with these barriers. We intend to inspect these measures and document that inspection in a different report. The scope, depth and schedule for your long-term actions will be addressed later. If your understanding of this commitment is different than as stated, please call Mr. William Ruland of my staff.

Mr. Leon R. Eliason

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In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter, its enclosure, and your response (if you choose to provide one) will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR). To the extent possible, your response should not include any personal privacy, proprietary, or safeguards information so that it can be placed in the PDR without redaction.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

James T. Wiggins, Director
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket Nos. 50-272; 50-311
License No. DPR-70; DPR-75

Enclosure: Combined Inspection Report Nos. 50-272/97-09 and 50-311/97-09

cc w/encl:

L. Storz, Senior Vice President - Nuclear Operations
E. Simpson, Senior Vice President - Nuclear Engineering
E. Salowitz, Director - Nuclear Business Support
A. F. Kirby, III, External Operations - Nuclear, Delmarva Power & Light Co.
D. Garchow, General Manager - Salem Operations
J. McMahon, Director - Quality Assurance & Nuclear Safety Review
D. Powell, Manager, Licensing and Regulation
R. Kankus, Joint Owner Affairs
A. Tapert, Program Administrator
J. J. Keenan, Esquire
M. Wetterhahn, Esquire
J. A. Isabella, Manager, Joint Generation
Atlantic Electric
Consumer Advocate, Office of Consumer Advocate
William Conklin, Public Safety Consultant, Lower Alloways Creek Township
Public Service Commission of Maryland
State of New Jersey
State of Delaware

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6/3/97

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** He reviewed letter*