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TO:
Mr. Eldon J. Brunner

FROM:
Metropolitan Edison Company
Reading, Pa.
J. G. Herbein

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ENCLOSURE

Addresses NRC concern relating to management control which allowed a decay heat pump examination to be delayed due to lack of spare parts.....

(2-P)

PLANT NAME: Three Mile Island Unit No. 1
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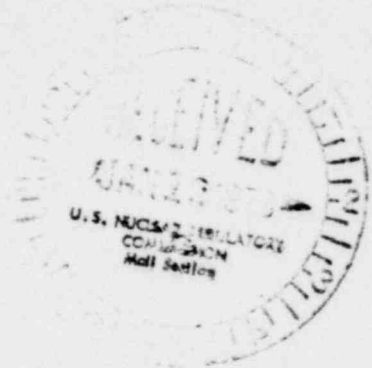
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January 6, 1978
GQL 1780

Mr. Eldon J. Brunner, Chief
Reactor Operations and Nuclear Support Branch
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
631 Park Avenue
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406



Dear Sir:

Three Mile Island Nuclear Station, Unit 1 (TMI-1)
Docket No. 50-289
Operating License No. DPR-50
Decay Heat Pump Shafts

Your Inspection letter 50-289/77-31 dated October 13, 1977, expressed your concern relating to our management controls which allowed a decay heat pump examination to be delayed due to lack of spare parts.

Upon receipt of B&W letter REM-I-303 of January 28, 1977, an investigation was initiated to find out which plant had the shaft failures, what material the failed shafts were made of, and what material the new shafts were made of. As a result of our investigation, it was learned that the TMI-1 shafts were of the same material as those that had failed and the same material as the replacement shafts.

B&W's letter of January 28, suggested performing a liquid penetrant inspection on the TMI-1 installed shafts. However, B&W made no indication as to the immediacy of performing the inspection. On B&W's suggestion, a liquid penetrant inspection of the TMI-1 shafts was scheduled for the 1977 Refueling Outage, and a spare parts search was performed. No spare parts were on hand. However, a complete set of spare parts had been ordered on January 11, 1977, and on March 2, 1977, a second set of spare parts was ordered.

Since the TMI-1 pumps had a long, satisfactory operating history and B&W did not indicate any immediacy in performing the inspection, it was decided that it would be prudent to postpone pump disassembly until the spare parts were available.

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It wasn't until July 26, 1977, (REM-I-331), that B&W expressed their concern on a generic basis for all decay heat pumps and the high vibration levels associated with the minimum recirculation flow rate. Although the TMI-1 pumps had never experienced high vibration levels in the minimum recirculation mode, pump cycle logs were set up. While researching the impact of the operating restrictions advised by B&W, it was noted that the restrictions were in conflict with the limits stated in Section 6 of the TMI-1 FSAR. This was reported as Reportable Occurrence No. 77-22/1T on August 26, 1977, and on September 3 and 4, 1977, the first in-place UT inspections were performed on each shaft.

It is apparent now, after extensive efforts to verify and demonstrate the integrity and acceptability of the TMI-1 installed shafts, that our decision to postpone pump disassembly was warranted.

Sincerely,

Signed J. G. Herbein

J. G. Herbein
Vice President-Generation

JGH:RJS:gs

cc: Director of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Attn: R. W. Reid, Chief
Operating Reactors Branch No. 4
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555

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