UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
631 PARK AVENUE
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19406

Docket No. 50-271

DEC 21 1979

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
ATTN: Mr. Robert H. Groce
Licensing Engineer
20 Turnpike Road
Westborough, Massachusetts 01581

Gentlemen:

This Information Notice is provided as an early notification of a possibly significant matter. It is expected that recipients will review the information for possible applicability to their facilities. No specific action or response is requested at this time. However we anticipate that further NRC evaluations will result in issuance of an IE Circular or Bulletin in the near future which will recommend or request specific applicant or licensee action. If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact this office.

Sincerely,

James M. Allan

Boyce H. Grier
Director

Enclosures:
1. IE Information Notice No. 79-33
2. List of Recently Issued IE Information Notices

CONTACT: D. L. Caphton
(215-337-5264)

cc w/encls:
W. F. Conway, Plant Superintendent
Ms. J. Abbey, Technical Secretary

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DUPLICATE

ENCLOSURE 1

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

SSINS No.: 6870
Accession No.:
7910250520

IE Information Notice No. 79-33
Date: December 21, 1979

IMPROPER CLOSURE OF PRIMARY CONTAINMENT EQUIPMENT ACCESS HATCHES

Description of Circumstances:

On December 8, 1979 difficulty was experienced in establishing the required nitrogen pressure in primary containment during power range startup testing of the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, Unit 3, following a refueling outage. On December 9, 1979, the licensee found three loose bolts on an equipment hatch to be the cause of leakage from the primary containment. The leakage was calculated to have been ten times the allowable containment leakage rate. This hatch had previously passed a local leak rate test (LLRT) and an integrated leak rate test of the containment in November 1979. The reactor had returned to operation on December 6, 1979 from the refueling outage and had operated at power levels less than 25 percent since December 6, 1979.

A subsequent inspection by the licensee of both primary containment equipment access hatches for Unit 2 was performed. TVA reported on December 20, 1979, to the NRC that they had found six of twelve closing dogs on one hatch improperly aligned and one closing bolt not torqued. A LLRT, performed with the hatch in this condition, showed a leakage rate higher than normal but within Technical Specification limits. The second hatch on this unit was found to have eight of twelve closing dogs improperly aligned.

The licensee is in the process of inspecting the closure of both primary containment equipment access hatches on Unit 1 and is reinspecting these hatches on Unit 3.

It is anticipated that further NRC evaluation will result in issuance of an IE Circular or Bulletin in the near future which will recommend or request specific applicant or licensee actions.

This information is provided to inform licensees of a possibly significant matter. The improper closure of the primary containment access hatches resulted from a lack of procedures for torque values, sequence of torque, and alignment of the closing dogs. We expect that recipients will review the adequacy of their procedures for access hatch installation at all facilities. If installation procedures do not exist or are inadequate, inspection and local leak rate testing can be used to confirm containment penetration integrity. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the Director of the appropriate NRC Regional Office.

No written response to this Information Notice is required.

ENCLOSURE 2

RECENTLY ISSUED IE INFORMATION NOTICES

Information Notice No.	Subject	Date Issued	Issued to
79-24	Overpressurization of Containment of a PWR Plant After a Main Steam Line Break	10/1/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an Operating License (OL) or Construction Permit (CP)
79-25	Reactor Trips at Turkey Point Unit 3 and 4	10/1/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP
79-26	Breach of Containment Integrity	11/5/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP
79-12A	Attempted Damage to New Fuel Assemblies	11/9/79	All Fuel Facilities, Research Reactors and Power Reactors with an OL or CP
79-27	Steam Generator Tube Ruptures at Two PWR Facilities	11/16/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP
79-28	Overloading of Structural Elements Due to Pipe Support Loads	11/16/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP
79-29	Loss of Nonsafety Related Reactor Coolant System Instrumentation During Operation	11/19/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP
79-30	Reporting of Defects and Noncompliances, 10 CFR Part 21	12/6/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP
79-31	Use of Incorrect Amplified Response Spectra (ARS)	12/13/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP
79-32	Separation of Electrical Cables for HPCI and ADS	12/21/79	All Power Reactor Facilities with an OL or CP