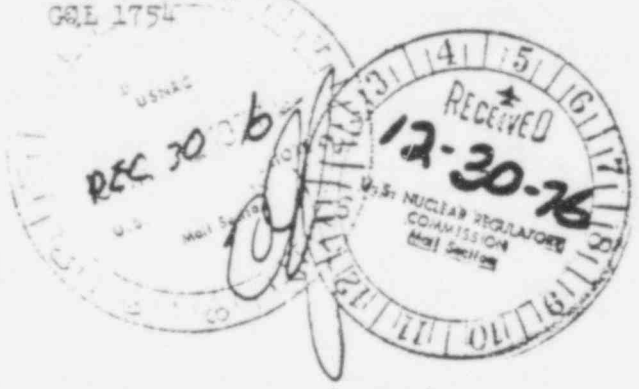
METROPOLITAN EDISON COMPANY

POST OFFICE BOX 542 READING, PENNSYLVANIA 19603 TELEPHONE 215 – 929-3601

December 22, 1976
GQL 1754



Mr. J. P. O'Reilly, Director
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Inspection & Enforcement
Region I
631 Park Avenue
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406

Dear Sir:

Three Mile Island Nuclear Station Unit 2 (TMI-2)
License No. CPPR-66
Docket No. 50-320
Motor Control Center Fire

On November 22, 1976, Mr. J. Bartlow of your office was verbally notified of a situation which Metropolitan Edison Co. considered to be reportable in accordance with the requirements of 10CFR50.55(e). This letter constitutes the required thirty-day follow-up letter.

Description

At about 5:00 P.M., a fire was discovered in a red safety related Motor Control Center MCC 2-1LEB located at the 305 elevation of the Auxiliary Building. The fire was discovered when a control room operator was dispatched to the Motor Control Center to determine the cause of the tripping of the Nuclear Service pump breaker. After discovering the fire, the station fire alarm was sounded and the fire was extinguished utilizing CO_2 and dry chemicals. The breakers to the Nuclear Service pump and the feeder breaker to the Motor Control Center had both tripped automatically.

The cause of the fire has been determined to have been caused by a misaligned stab of one of the stab assemblies connected to Motor Control Center branch breaker associated with the pump starter. As a result of this improper stab engagement to the Motor Control Center vertical bus, an electrical arc developed which subsequently ignited the vertical insulating barrier.

Analysis of Safety Implications

The damage to Motor Control Center MCC 2-1LEB, would have been considered a single failure and the operation of the unit not affected if the unit had been in operation. The redundant Motor Control Center would have provided power to the associated vital loads to permit safe plant shutdown.

Correction Action

The damaged Motor Control Center is being replaced with a unit of improved design and new cables will be installed. A program has been initiated to check the stab alignment on other ITE motor control centers using a test fixture supplied by ITE.

The existing ITE motor control centers were also found to contain horizontal bus isolating barriers fabricated of combustible material. These horizontal barriers are planned to be replaced with a UL listed fire retardant material. The vertical bus isolating barriers for the same ITE motor control centers are constructed of material that is self extinguishing. The acceptability of this material is being investigated.

Sincerely,

R. C. Arnold
Vice President

RCA:CWS:daf