

PHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC COMPANY
BEACH BOTTOM ATOMIC POWER STATION
Delco, Pennsylvania
17014

TERA

March 27, 1979

Mr. Royce H. Grier
Office of Inspection and Enforcement
Region I
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
611 Park Avenue
King of Prussia, PA 19406

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS
POOR QUALITY PAGES

SUBJECT: REPORTABLE OCCURRENCE - PROMPT NOTIFICATION

Confirming W. J. Ullrich's conversation with Mr. Greenman, Region I,
United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission on 3/27/79.

Reference: Bucket No. 050-277/78
Beach Bottom Units 2 and 3
Technical Specification Reference: 3.8.C.1

Report No. 3-79-17/1P
Occurrence Date: 3/26/79

Identification of Occurrence:

Gaseous release rate exceeded allowable Technical Specification limits
for instantaneous release rate.

Conditions Prior to Occurrence:

Unit 3 operating at about 80 percent power.

Apparent Cause of Occurrence:

Lack of a proper procedure lead to valving errors. The valving errors
along with loss of a water seal on a sump lead to the gaseous release.

Analysis of Occurrence:

Unit 3 was operating at about 80 percent power prior to the occurrence.
Recent recombiner condenser tube leaks required that the recombiner
condenser drains be valved to the radiaste system. About eight hours
prior to this occurrence, the recombiner drains were valved over to the
main condenser. It appears that vibration caused a valve in the drain
line to close. Over a period of time, water backed up through the system
and caused problems with the recombiner system. Because of the water
accumulation, frequent recombiner compressor oil changes were required.
At about 3 p.m. on the date of occurrence, the 'A' recombiner compressor
tripped. The alternate compressor was started and tripped almost
immediately. Vacuum conditions on the unit started to deteriorate and
load was decreased to 200 MWe. Both recombiner compressors were found
to have significant water in the oil. This condition was rectified by

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performing oil changes. During the oil changes, two off-gas releases from the Unit 3 vent stack occurred. Following this, the release rates returned to near normal and both recombiner compressors were able to be restarted. Vacuum was recovered. Later, with no indication of further difficulties, the vent stack again spiked and remained at an elevated level. Due to the complexity of the prior operations, the cause of the elevated release could not be immediately determined. The direct cause of the release was eventually traced to an equipment drain sump which pumped down and reached a low level, thereby permitting the off-gas which was venting through a leaking valve and an open drain valve to break the water seal in the sump and be released to the building ventilation system. This condition was corrected when the drain valve was closed and the water seal in the sump re-established.

The combined three Unit #3 vent stack releases exceed the Technical Specification instantaneous release limit for approximately 65 minutes. Approximately 45 CF were released. Maximum release rate was 290% of Technical Specification instantaneous release limit.

Corrective Action:

When the source of the problem was identified, valving was returned to normal. Investigation continues. Procedures involved with this operation will be revised and the valves more clearly identified.

Very truly yours,



W. T. Ulrich
Station Superintendent

WTU:kif