



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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Docket No. 50-29

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Files

FROM: Paul F. Collins, Chief, Operator Licensing Branch, DPM

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH YANKEE PERSONNEL

On February 7, 1979, Harold Denton, Director of Nuclear Reactor Regulation; Boyce H. Grier, Director, Region I; and Paul F. Collins, Chief, Operator Licensing Branch, NRR; visited the Yankee Atomic Power Plant to discuss NRC regulations and actions with utility personnel.

There were approximately 15 individuals at the meeting, including operators, HP technicians, instrument and maintenance personnel, first line supervision and facility and corporate managers.

After introductions, Mr. Denton informed the group that Dr. Powell had talked to the NRR staff regarding his study at Yankee and had recommended that those who write regulations visit Yankee and talk to the operating staff. The Director indicated that we were there to listen and explain to the extent possible, in the time allotted, the reasoning behind our actions. No decisions would, or could, be made at the meeting.

The individuals present indicated strongly that they believed that they were being overly regulated and their actions monitored too closely.

Further, they believe that NRC reports of their activities contain non-compliance items that are trivial but give the impression that they are incompetent.

The over-regulation, over-monitoring and continuous fault finding is resulting in undue stress, job dissatisfaction and frustration.

Listed below are examples of the type of items brought to our attention:

1. NRC Procedures for Handling Personnel Errors

The inability of NRC to recognize that individuals will make errors and to permit a certain amount of "human" errors to occur without demanding corrective actions, retraining each individual, revising procedures, writing new procedures, instituting additional checks and requiring additional personnel to verify actions.

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2. Procedures: Requirements, Required Use, and NRC Auditing Thereof

The general feelings were that NRC was more concerned with procedures being initiated, signed and filed properly, then they were that the task had been completed in a safe manner. Also, the "proper" method of completing the procedures interfered with efficient operations. Operators indicated that they felt undo stress when NRC personnel monitored their method of completing procedures as they were performing tasks.

3. NRC Record Maintenance Requirements

Those responsible for completing and/or maintaining records indicated that an excessive amount of time is devoted to assuring that the records are "perfect" to avoid trivial items of non-compliance.

4. Security Requirements

To a man, the plant employees were very disturbed that they were subject to having personal belongings searched, and that they were now deemed untrustworthy after many years of employment at the facility. Many indicated they were uncomfortable with "all the strangers running around with guns"--the guard force.

5. Inspection Reports and Inspector Techniques

There was the general belief that inspections were too detailed and that minor matters were blown out of proportion, thereby creating a false impression of incompetence. They believe that inspection reports should contain adverse remarks only when they are of serious concern. Another means should be found to deal with the "nit picking" items. Some individuals indicated that inspectors seemed intent on finding a "guilty party."

6. Industry Input Into NRC Decisions

Many individuals expressed the belief that they have little or no input to NRC decisions; that NRC puts procedures into effect to please critics without industry receiving an adequate hearing and without considering the effect on plant personnel.

7. Growth of Regulation

The older employees believe the plant was operated safely from 1960 to 1973 with about 65 people and a minimum of paperwork. They can't see any substantial improvement in the plant performance with about 170 employees and the overwhelming amount of paperwork required since 1973.

8. Licensed Operators

Operators resent having to take the annual examination with the associated criteria for adverse actions. They indicate retraining is fine; requalification (examinations) is not needed, nor wanted. They feel they are the only civilian industrial workers who requalify on an annual basis. They also indicated that they have been "threatened" by inspectors who indicated that NRC would substitute their examinations for the facility examinations. Further, they have been informed by inspectors that if they go to a simulator for retraining, they will be examined by NRC while they are there.

They also indicated that inspectors have urged facility management to make the examinations tougher. In addition, they believe that the content of the examination is not sufficiently job oriented. Further, they believe drills should be considered as training exercises, not a test with associated criticism and written reviews.

Finally, they felt they should not have to be interviewed or monitored by inspectors while they were performing jobs or when assigned to the control room. They believe they should be relieved from their watch-standing duties if they are to be interviewed.

Memo to the files

- 4 -

We discussed the concerns as best we could in the time allotted. Where possible, we cleared up misconceptions regarding NRC requirements, particularly those involving the requalification program. We indicated that we would consider their comments and determine what, if anything, could be done to resolve their concerns.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Paul F. Collins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "C".

Paul F. Collins, Chief
Operator Licensing Branch
Division of Project Management