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

APR 1 1980

Docket No. 50-312

Sacramento Municipal Utility District  
Attn: Mr. William C. Walbridge  
General Manager  
P. O. Box 15830  
Sacramento, California 95813

Gentlemen:

During the period of December 17, 1979, to January 10, 1980, the Rancho Seco Nuclear Generating Station (RSNGS) was operated with certain portions of the Emergency Core Cooling System (ECCS) in degraded conditions which could have resulted in serious consequences in the event certain postulated faults had occurred. These degraded conditions appear to have resulted from personnel errors in implementing operating procedures and in your failure to maintain effective procedures and controls to preclude such occurrences.

These matters were brought to our attention by your reports dated January 14, January 25, and February 6, 1980 (LER's 79-23, 79-24 and 80-03, respectively). We are concerned about the implementation of your management controls that allowed these degraded conditions to occur in your plant in a relatively short period of time. These conditions resulted in a direct violation of a Condition of the License specially imposed by the Commission, exceeding Limiting Conditions for Operation prescribed in the facility Technical Specifications and noncompliance with operating procedures required by the Technical Specifications. The number and safety significance of personnel errors which resulted in the degraded conditions of the ECCS constitute a serious matter which indicates weaknesses in your management controls to insure safe operation of the RSNGS.

We propose to impose civil penalties for the three items of apparent noncompliance set forth in Appendix A to this letter. The total amount of the civil penalties for all items cited in Appendix A is \$142,000. The Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, limits the total civil penalties within any 30 day period to \$25,000. Limiting the penalties for those items cited for the period December 17, 1979 to January 15, 1980, results in a subtraction of \$117,000. Therefore, penalties of \$25,000 are proposed. Appendix B of this letter is the Notice of Proposed Imposition of Civil Penalties.

In addition to the civil penalties, we are issuing the enclosed Order (Appendix C) effective immediately. This Order requires that you assure that your administrative control of licensed activities involving operating equipment include independent verification of the availability of all required equipment when a counterpart is removed from or returned to operable status. This Order further requires that you formally review and report your actions to prevent recurrence. It also requires that you meet with Office of Inspection and Enforcement management on or before May 5, 1980, at a location in

CERTIFIED MAIL  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

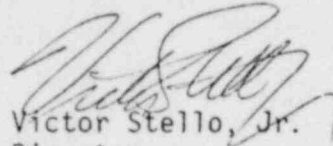
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the vicinity of the Rancho Seco site to describe how your corrective actions will be implemented. Details relating to this meeting will be arranged by the Region V Director.

In accordance with Section 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," Part 2, Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, a copy of this letter and its enclosures will be placed in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Public Document Room.

Sincerely,



Victor Stello, Jr.  
Director  
Office of Inspection  
and Enforcement

Enclosures:

1. Appendix A, Notice of Violation
2. Appendix B, Notice of Proposed Imposition of Civil Penalties
3. Appendix C, Order Modifying License

cc w/enclosures:

Paul W. Carr, President  
John J. Mattimoe, Assistant General Manager