

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT  
REGION IV

Investigation Report No. 50-498/80-26; 50-499/80-26

Docket No. 50-498/50-499

Licensee: Houston Lighting and Power Company

Facility: South Texas Project, Units No. 1 and 2

Investigation at: Bay City, Matagorda, County, Texas

Investigation Conducted: September 4, 5 and 9, 1980

Investigator: *R. K. Herr* 3 OCT 1980  
R. K. Herr, Investigation Specialist Date

Inspector: *J. I. Tapia* 10-3-80  
J. I. Tapia, Reactor Inspector Date  
Engineering Support Section  
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Reviewed by: *W. A. Crossman* 10/6/80  
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Investigation Summary

Investigation on September 4, 5 and 9, 1980 (Report No. 50-498/80-26; 50-499/80-26)

Areas Investigated: Allegations that Brown & Root, Inc. (B&R) audit section identified deficiencies that were not followed up appropriately, that unqualified personnel were working in the engineering department, and that the alleged was

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intimidated by Brown and Root personnel. This investigation involved 32 investigator-hours by one NRC Investigator and one NRC Inspector.

Results: Investigation disclosed that the allegation concerning audit deficiencies was satisfactorily addressed in a report recently submitted by the RRI (See NRC Inspection Report No. 50-498/80-18; 50-499/80-18). Further investigation disclosed that the other allegations have no merit.

### INTRODUCTION

The South Texas Nuclear Project (STP), Units 1 and 2, is currently under construction near the town of Bay City, Texas. Houston Lighting and Power Company (HL&P) is the Construction Permit holder; Brown & Root, Inc. (B&R) is the architect/engineer and construction firm.

### REASON FOR INVESTIGATION

On July 18, 1980, the NRC Resident Reactor Inspector (RRI) at STP was contacted by Individual A who alleged that audit deficiency responses were not being addressed properly by Brown & Root management personnel. Individual A also stated that unqualified personnel working for B&R are employed at STP and that he (Individual A) felt intimidated by B&R management.

### SUMMARY OF FACTS

On July 18, 1980, Individual A entered the RRI office at STP and explained that B&R management personnel's response to his audit findings in June 1980 was incorrect. Individual A also expressed concerns about unqualified personnel employed by B&R at STP. Individual A related the following specific allegations:

1. That construction deficiencies were not reported within the allowable time frame and responses to his audit findings (B&R site Audit No. 36) were not adequate in that the responses addressed the problem and not the cause.
2. That a former B&R clerk, was recently promoted to Assistant Project Quality Engineer and is not qualified.
3. That the B&R audit section at STP did not have qualified auditors.
4. That he (Individual A) was intimidated by B&R management personnel.
5. That an engineer was scheduled for promotion as a Project Site Engineer (PSE) and that his experience may not be adequate.
6. That carbon steel brace stiffeners were in violation of specifications in that they were in contact with Category 1 stainless steel liner plates, and that this assembly had been exposed to atmospheric conditions which could cause "corrosion cracking" upon installation in the reactor containment building. Also, that there is no procedure for corrosion testing as recommended in Regulatory Guide No. 144, "Control of the use of Sensitized Stainless Steel."

1. Persons Contacted

Principal Licensee Employees

\*R. A. Frazar, QA Manager  
L. D. Wilson, QA Supervisor

Present B&R Employees

R. H. Leasburg, Site Manager  
Mr. Robert Withrow, Assistant Engineering Project Manager - Site  
Mr. Douglas Robertson, Construction Chief Engineer

Other Individuals

Individuals A through I

\*Denotes those attending exit interview.

2. Investigation of Allegations

Allegation No. 1

That construction deficiencies were not reported within the allowable time frame and responses to the audit findings (B&R site Audit No. 36) were not adequate in that the responses addressed the problem and not the cause.

Investigative Findings

On September 4, 1980, Individual A was interviewed at STP and provided excerpts from documents 50-498; 50-499/79-19 and 50-498; 50-499/80-18, which addressed the above allegation. Individual A stated that he was unaware of the above documentation and after perusing the above documents stated that he is satisfied that these documents adequately address his allegation.

Allegation No. 2

That Individual B, a former clerk, was recently promoted to Assistant Project Quality Engineer and is not qualified.

Investigative Findings

On September 9, 1980, Individual C, was interviewed in his office. Individual C advised that Individual B is not an Assistant Project Quality Engineer. He explained that she held the position of Administrative Specialist since March, 1980, and that within the past two weeks was

promoted to Engineering Technician 2. He remarked that her work remained essentially the same and provided the following description of her duties:

Performs logging functions

Reads FREAS and NCRs for legibility and ensures that all blanks are filled in by the author

Maintains files

Assures timely routing of documents to the proper disciplines

Individual C stated that Individual B does not perform any elementary design functions.

#### Interview of Individual B

On September 9, 1980, Individual B was interviewed and stated she was initially hired by B&R in the spring of 1979 as a clerk/runner. She explained that in March, 1980, she applied and was accepted for the position of Administrative Specialist 1 in the Quality Engineering Department. She remarked that within the past two weeks she had received a title promotion to Engineering Technician 2; however, she also pointed out that her duties remained essentially the same. She denied performing any type of elementary design functions. Individual B pointed out that on two interoffice forms titled Project Quality Engineer Review Sheet and Project Site Engineering Review Sheet, her initials appear on the documents. She explained that if when reviewing these documents she observes a blank on the form that designates the location or a date of a particular problem, she will return that document to the sender for proper action and initial the bottom of the interoffice form. She also pointed out that if her supervisor discovers a problem with one of the forms, he will instruct her to return the form to the sender with the proper comments and may dictate the comments to her. Individual B explained that when she returns the form to the sender and her supervisor is not present, she has signed the bottom of the document for her supervisor. She suggested that her signing of the documents could be an indication to someone else that she is in a position wherein she is making design function decisions. However, she quickly pointed out that this is not the situation. Individual B explained that on correctly filled out documents she merely forwards them to the proper engineering discipline with her initials on the bottom of the document to indicate the document was properly received and filed. Individual B described her position as mainly a processing position and denied making any type of decisions on design functions.

#### Interview of Individual D

On September 9, 1980, Individual D, was interviewed in his office. He stated that he was aware of an allegation made concerning Individual B regarding her position and looked into this allegation approximately two months earlier. He advised that upon his inquiries he determined that Individual B was not performing any elementary design function. Individual D explained that on one occasion, Individual B worked in his department as a clerk and described her work performance as excellent.

#### Allegation No. 3

That the B&R Audit Section at STP did not have qualified auditors.

#### Investigative Findings

The investigation identified the following B&R QA Site Auditors: Individual E, Individual F, and Individual G.

A review of NRC documents identified as Report No. 99900502/80-01, dated March 26, 1980, and Report No. 99900502/80-02, dated July 11, 1980, identified the above named site auditors. These documents disclosed that these individuals are all qualified to perform audits on the various disciplines required at STP.

#### Allegation No. 4

That he (Individual A) was intimidated by B&R management personnel.

#### Investigative Findings

On September 4, 1980, Individual A claimed that he was intimidated by Individual E when he told him that Individual H had told him that various HL&P and B&R personnel told him that Individual A was a nut. Individual A stated that from this comment, along with comments that his wife received from neighbors concerning the status of layoffs and investigations at the STP, he deduced that he was being intimidated. Individual A described intimidation according to Webster's dictionary as "being in fear." Individual A maintained that he did not change or alter any records or make any deficient reports regarding his work as a result of the perceived intimidation, however, he maintained that because of the feelings people have about him that this caused him to be in fear of some type of reprisal. Further investigation disclosed that Individual A was described by HL&P and B&R personnel as a stubborn individual who sometimes only looked at his side of various concerns and refused to accept different points of views from other individuals. The investigation did not disclose any threats made to Individual A.



Allegation No. 5

That Individual I, B&R engineer, was scheduled to be promoted as a Project Site Engineer and that his experience may not be adequate.

Investigative Findings

On September 9, 1980, an interview with Individual C was conducted in his office. Individual C advised that Individual I did apply for a position as a Project Site Engineer approximately two months ago when an opening was available. He stated that Individual I was not selected for the position and another individual was employed as a Project Site Engineer. Additionally, an interview with Individual D disclosed that Individual I is presently working for him and to the best of his knowledge has not worked as a Project Site Engineer.

Allegation No. 6

That carbon steel brace stiffeners were in violation of specifications in that they were in contact with Category 1 stainless steel liner plate, and that this assembly had been exposed to atmospheric conditions which could cause "corrosion cracking" upon installation in the reactor containment building. Also that there is no procedure for corrosion testing as recommended by Regulatory Guide No. 1.44.

Investigative Finding

Investigation disclosed that the structure in question is identified as a refueling pool liner. This structure is non-safety related as identified in Table (3.2.a-1), Containment Internal Structure Classification. Fabrication of this structure is governed by Section VIII ASME, Division 1, as referenced in the Pittsburgh-Des Moines specification, on on-site fabricator. The reference to the Regulatory Guide No. 1.44 does not apply to this structure nor is the licensee committed to this Guide.

Contact with Individual A

On September 4, 1980, Individual A met with the NRC Investigator and one NRC Inspector at the STP as per his request. Individual A provided the above six concerns and assisted the NRC Investigator in reducing his concerns into a typewritten statement which he agreed to sign the following day. On September 5, 1980, Individual A met with the NRC Investigator and the NRC Inspector and read his statement (Document 1). At this time, Individual A stated that his statement was true and correct; however, he had changed his mind and decided that he did not want to sign the statement due to personal concerns (Document 2 refers).

Exit

On September 9, 1980, Mr. Richard Frazar, HL&P Site Manager, was briefed concerning this investigation.



Captioned Documents

The typewritten statement and copies of all documents identified herein relating to these allegations are maintained in the NRC Region IV office. The following is a list of documents utilized in this report.

1. Document 1 - Unsigned statement of Individual A dated 09-05-80.
2. Document 2 - Results of interview with Individual A dated 09-05-80.