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Mr. R. H. Engelken, Director
Office of Enforcement and Inspection
Region V
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1990 North California Boulevard
Walnut Creek Plaza, Suite 202
Walnut Creek, California 94596



Re: Docket No. 50-133
License No. DPR-7
Humboldt Bay Power Plant
Unit No. 3

Dear Mr. Engelken:

This report is submitted in accordance with 10 CFR 20.403(b) (4) and involves damage to a fuel assembly. Telephone notification of this occurrence was made by Messrs. W. A. Raymond and E. D. Weeks of the Humboldt Bay Power Plant staff to Mr. R. T. Dodds of your office on June 5, 1975 as a matter of information. In this conversation it was stated that at approximately 2015 hours on June 4, 1975, during the transfer of an irradiated fuel assembly from the transfer basket position in the spent fuel pool to a pool storage location, the fuel assembly became disengaged from the fuel grapple, fell approximately six feet, and struck the spent fuel pool floor. It then tipped over and fell into the ten-foot deep spent fuel cask pit in the corner of the pool. Personnel were immediately removed from the area until an air sample could be obtained.

The air sample was normal and personnel reentered the refueling building. The grapple was carefully examined as it had been shortly before the fuel assembly was moved. In both inspections the grapple was found to be satisfactory for use. It has been tentatively concluded that the fuel assembly had not been grappled properly or properly checked prior to movement of the fuel bundle. This conclusion will be further substantiated if no handle damage is discovered after closer examination of the bundle.

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June 11, 1975

Once visibility in the spent fuel pool improved the fuel assembly was visually examined with binoculars for indication of damage. The only damage observed was that the channel had been forced down over the fuel bundle nose piece and was split in at least two corners from the channel bottom for about eight to ten inches.

The fuel assembly had been removed from the reactor following shutdown and had been grappled twice before the incident occurred. This fuel assembly had resided in the core for two operating cycles and was scheduled for use for two more operating cycles. The bundle was one of 51 provided in the first quarter core reload by Exxon Nuclear.

On June 7, 1975 an attempt was made to recover the fuel assembly from the cask pit. As the fuel assembly was lifted toward the vertical position the channel came off and fuel rods fell out of the bundle. The remaining portion of the bundle was lowered and the refueling building was evacuated until an air sample could be taken. The air sample showed no abnormal airborne concentrations. In striking either the pool floor or the cask pit floor the tie rods and/or tie rod keeper(s) apparently sheared allowing the bundle to separate. The information concerning the observations made on June 7 was discussed in a telephone conversation between Mr. E. D. Weeks of the Plant staff and Mr. E. T. Dodds of your office on June 9. This discussion included the possible applicability of the 10 CFR 20.403(b)(4) reporting requirement in view of the observed damage to the fuel assembly. On June 10 Mr. Dodds confirmed that such a report would be required.

It is planned to recover the fuel assembly following the present refueling outage. The manufacturer has been contacted and will participate in an examination of the bundle to determine the extent of the damage.

There were no personnel exposures, injuries or off-site consequences as a result of this incident.

By copy of this letter we are providing the 30-day written report required by 10 CFR 20.405(a)(2) to the Director of the Office of Enforcement and Inspection.

Very truly yours,

Philip A. Grane, Jr.

CC: Dr. D. K. Knuth, Director
Office of Enforcement and Inspection
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

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