



VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION

SEVENTY SEVEN GROVE STREET

RUTLAND, VERMONT 05701

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February 5, 1981

REPLY TO: FVY 81-21
ENGINEERING OFFICE

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FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 01701
TELEPHONE 617-872-8100

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D. C. 20555

Attention: Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

References: (a) License No. DPR-28 (Docket No. 50-271)
(b) Letter, USNRC to VYNPC dated January 27, 1981

Subject: Clarification of the General Electric/Vermont Yankee Position on
Vermont Yankee Fuel Failures

Dear Sir:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the documentation pertaining to corrosion induced fuel failures at the Vermont Yankee plant as requested in Reference (b).

As stated in the December 11, 1979 presentation to the NRC, detailed test and record search data have led Vermont Yankee and General Electric to agree that the corrosion and subsequent failure was most probably the result of the synergistic effects of variable fuel cladding properties and metallic impurities in the reactor coolant. We characterized this unusual sequence of events as a combination of "tails" of parametric distributions. Fuel rods with cladding manufactured during the same time period and with a similar manufacturing history as rods which failed in Vermont Yankee have performed satisfactorily in other plants further supporting the synergistic event theory.

The General Electric water chemistry recommendations previously made to customers were sent to the NRC in response to a verbal NRC request. These recommendations are primarily focused on reducing and controlling radiation levels due to corrosion product buildup in piping systems and are certainly not intended as a summary of the December 11, 1979 meeting in your offices.

We trust this clarification eliminates the apparent conflict in documentation previously submitted in regard to the corrosion related fuel failures at the Vermont Yankee plant.

Should you have any further questions in regard to the above, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Very truly yours,

VERMONT YANKEE NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION

R. L. Smith

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Engineer - Licensing

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DIVISION

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