UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION V
1990 N. CALIFORNIA BOULEVARD
SUITE 202, WALNUT CREEK PLAZA
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94596

April 22, 1981

Docket Nos. 50-528, 50-529, 50-530

Arizona Public Service Company
P. O. Box 21666
Phoenix, Arizona 85036

Attention: Mr. E. E. Van Brunt, Jr.
Vice President, Nuclear Projects

Gentlemen:

The enclosed information notice is provided as an early notification of a possibly significant matter. It is expected that recipients will review the information for possible applicability to their facilities. No specific action or response is requested at this time. If further NRC evaluations so indicate, an IE circular or bulletin will be issued to recommend or request specific licensee actions. If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact the Director of the appropriate NRC Regional Office.

Sincerely,

R. H. Engelken
Director

Enclosure:
IE Information Notice
No. 81-15

cc w/enclosure:
F. W. Hartley, APS

SSINS No.: 6835
Accession No.:
8011040286
IN 81-15

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

April 22, 1981

IE Information Notice No. 81-15: DEGRADATION OF AUTOMATIC ECCS ACTUATION CAPABILITY BY ISOLATION OF INSTRUMENT LINES

Description of Circumstances:

On March 23, 1981 at Georgia Power Company's Hatch Unit 2, an instrument technician, while investigating a drywell low-pressure alarm, found that seven of eight isolation valves were closed. The eighth valve was found slightly open and was considered as being functionally closed. These safety-related valves (also identified as panel or root valves) isolated twelve instruments that automatically actuate emergency core cooling systems (ECCS), reactor protection system, and containment isolation systems on high drywell pressure. The capability for manual actuation of the affected systems was continuously available from the control room. However, had a loss-of-coolant accident occurred, all systems would have been actuated by a redundant signal of low reactor water level, except for the automatic depressurization system. Those valves discovered to be closed were opened, valve alignment checks were performed, and no other discrepancies were found. These isolation valves were incorrectly identified as instrument drain valves and were closed on March 9, 1981 during completion of a valve lineup procedure. The drain valves that were being closed were on other safety-related lines that were of the same size and appearance as the high drywell pressure instrument lines that were isolated.

Another event involving closure of some similar isolation valves was recently reported by the Peach Bottom Unit 2 licensee on April 1, 1981. The closed valves were found by a licensee employee who was troubleshooting an intermittent drywell pressure switch trouble alarm. Only one isolation valve was found fully closed, whereas two other valves were found one-eighth turn open (but considered closed for review of protective system responses). Redundant channels were verified to be operable; thus, no automatic protective or emergency cooling system actuation would have been lost from the high drywell pressure signal.

This information is provided as an early notification of a possibly significant matter that is still under review by the NRC staff. In case the continuing NRC review finds that specific licensee actions would be appropriate, an IE bulletin or circular may be issued. In the interim, we expect that licensees will review this information for applicability to their operating procedures, paying particular attention to valve alignment checklists and requirements for independent verification of valve alignments including instrument valves.

No written response to this information notice is required. If you need additional information with regard to this matter, contact the Director of the appropriate NRC Regional Office.

Attachment:
Recently issued IE Information Notices

Attachment
IN 81-15
April 22, 1981

RECENTLY ISSUED
IE INFORMATION NOTICES

Information Notice No.	Subject	Date of Issue	Issued to
81-14	Potential Overstress of Shafts on Fisher Series 9200 Butterfly Valves with Expandable T Rings	4/17/81	All power reactor facilities with an OL
81-13	Jammed Source Rack in a Gamma Irradiator	4/14/81	Specified Irradiator licensees
81-12	Guidance on Order Issued January 9, 1981 Regarding Automatic Control Rod Insertion on Low Control Air Pressure	3/31/81	All BWR facilities with an OL or CP
81-11	Alternate Rod Insertion for BWR Scram Represents a Potential Path for Loss of Primary Coolant	3/30/81	All BWR facilities with an OL or CP
81-10	Inadvertant Containment Spray Due to Personnel Error	3/25/81	All power reactor facilities with an OL or CP
81-09	Degradation of Residual Heat Removal (RHR) System	3/26/81	All power reactor facilities with an OL or CP
81-08	Repetitive Failures of Limitorque Operator SNB-4 Motor-to-Shaft Key	3/20/81	All power reactor facilities with an OL or CP
81-07	Potential Problem with Water-Soluble Purge Dam Materials Used During Inert Gas Welding	3/16/81	All power reactor facilities with an OL or CP
81-06	Failure of ITE Model K-600 Circuit Breaker	3/11/81	All power reactor facilities with an OL or CP

OL = Operating Licenses
CP = Construction Permits