



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION I
631 PARK AVENUE
KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA 194 6

10 JUL 1981

Docket No. 50-225

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
ATTN: R. T. Lahey, Chairman
Department of Nuclear Engineering and Science
Troy, New York 12181

Gentlemen:

Subject: Inspection 81-01



This refers to the special safety inspection conducted by Mr. R. L. Nimitz of this office on January 22-23, 1981 at the Critical Facility in Schenectady, New York of activities authorized by NRC License No. CX-22 and to the discussions of our findings held by Mr. Nimitz with you and members of your staff at the conclusion of the inspection.

Areas examined during this inspection are described in the Office of Inspection and Enforcement Inspection Report which is enclosed with this letter. Within these areas, the inspection consisted of selective examinations of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, and observations by the inspector.

Based on the results of this inspection, it appears that certain of your activities were not conducted in full compliance with NRC requirements, as set forth in the Notice of Violation, enclosed herewith as Appendix A. These items of noncompliance have been categorized into the levels described in the Federal Register Notice (45 FR 66754) dated October 7, 1980. You are required to respond to this letter and in preparing your response, you should follow the instructions in Appendix A.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the Commission's regulations, a copy of this letter and the enclosures will be placed in the NRC's Public Document Room. If this report contains any information that you (or your contractors) believe to be exempt from disclosure under 10 CFR 9.5(a)(4), it is necessary that you (a) notify this office by telephone within ten (10) days from the date of this letter of your intention to file a request for withholding; and (b) submit within 25 days from the date of this letter a written application to this office to withhold such information. Consistent with section 2.790(b)(1), any such application must be accompanied by an affidavit executed by the owner of the information which identifies the document or part sought to be withheld, and which contains a full statement of the reasons on the basis which it is claimed that the information should be withheld from public disclosure. This section

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further requires the statement to address with specificity the considerations listed in 10 CFR 2.790(b)(4). The information sought to be withheld shall be incorporated as far as possible into a separate part of the affidavit. If we do not hear from you in this regard within the specified periods noted above, the report will be placed in the Public Document Room. The telephone notification of your intent to request withholding, or any request for an extension of the 10 day period which you believe necessary, should be made to the Supervisor, Files, Mail and Records, USNRC Region I, at (215) 337-5223.

We have reviewed the April 27, 1981 letter from Messrs. D. R. Harris and P. R. Nelson of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Critical Facility. Appendix A and the enclosed inspection report appropriately reflect the information provided in that letter. Regarding the apparent lack of a primary coolant system leak procedure, we have determined that a procedure was in place, but that it lacked adequate scope and definitive guidance. We understand that action has been taken by you to correct the specific procedural deficiencies identified by our inspector. Because adequate approved procedures must be in place to provide appropriate guidance to operating personnel, a review of your current facility procedures, to identify similar shortcomings, appears warranted. Consequently, in your reply to this letter, please address your plans in this matter. We appreciate your cooperation with us.

The responses directed by this letter are not subject to the clearance procedures of the Office of Management and Budget as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, PL 96-511.

If you have any questions concerning this inspection, we will be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,



Thomas T. Martin, Acting Director
Division of Engineering and
Technical Inspection

Enclosures:

1. Appendix A, Notice of Violation
2. Office of Inspection and Enforcement Inspection Report
Number 50-225/81-01

cc w/encls:

Peter R. Nelson, Supervisor RPI Critical Facility
D. R. Harris, Director RPI Critical Facility