

DCS

MAY 8 1990

Docket No. 50-289

GPU Nuclear Corporation
ATTN: Mr. H. D. Hukill
Vice President and Director, TMI-1
P. O. Box 480
Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057

Gentlemen:

Subject: Inspection Report No. 50-289/90-06

During the period from February 27, 1990 to April 3, 1990, members of the NRC Region I staff conducted routine safety inspections at your facility. We have documented the results of those inspections in the enclosed report. At the conclusion of the inspection period, Mr. F. Young, of my staff, summarized the inspection findings to Mr. G. Broughton and other members of your staff.

In general, we continue to note that the plant is being operated in a competent and safe manner. Positive control of the plant was seen during the shutdown due to a steam generator tube leak and during two reactor trips that occurred during the inspection period. Even though the second reactor trip was planned and properly coordinated, we do not consider initiating a reactor trip as a prudent engineering solution to an operational problem.

While your actions to shutdown upon detection of a steam generator tube leak was prompt and prudent, your reporting of this event to the NRC Operations Center was not timely. Given the nature of the plant shutdown and the notifications and press releases made by your staff during the period, we do not believe that you satisfied the "as soon as practical" aspects of the notification requirements. The lack of timely compliance with the reporting requirements and the potential for communications problems could erode the public's confidence in the utility and/or the NRC. Based on discussions with your staff, we believe that this issue has been resolved.

Your cooperation in these matters is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Edward C. Wenzinger, Chief
Reactor Projects Branch No. 4

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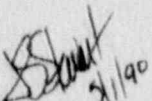
- Enclosure: 1. Executive Summary
2. Inspection Report 50-289/90-05
3. Handout for the March 13, 1990 NRC/GPUN Meeting on
Primary to Secondary Leakage

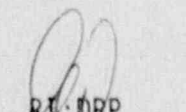
cc w/encl:

E. L. Blake, Jr., Esquire
T. G. Broughton, Operations and Maintenance Director, TMI-1
R. J. McGoey, Manager, PWR Licensing
C. W. Smyth, TMI-1 Licensing Manager
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Local Public Document Room (LPDR)
NRC Resident Inspector
Nuclear Safety Information Center (NSIC)
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R. Brady, RI
W. Kane, DRP, RI (cover letter and enclosure 1 only)
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RI:DRP
E. Wenzinger
4/3/90

*SEE PREVIOUS CONCURRENCE

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Executive Summary

Plant Operations

Plant startup and subsequent power escalation marked the conclusion of the 8R refueling outage. The licensee identified a violation of the decay heat removal technical specification on February 27 when they discovered that the turbine bypass valves were isolated with plant temperature greater than 250 degrees F. This was due to personnel error in that established procedures were not followed. A low power reactor trip occurred on March 4 after completion of zero power physics testing. This trip was caused by personnel error and appears to be an isolated event. During power escalation on March 8, a primary to secondary tube leak occurred. The licensee's voluntary action of immediately discontinuing plant operations prior to exceeding technical specifications was prudent. Given the nature of the plant shutdown which was necessitated by this event the licensee did not adequately satisfy the "as soon as practical" notification requirement in 10 CFR 50.72 section (b) (2) vi.. This weakness appeared mainly to be a lack of understanding on the part of personnel who were responsible for making this notification. On March 30, the licensee performed a manual turbine/reactor trip followed by a manual initiation of emergency feedwater and establishment of natural circulation to redistribute secondary corrosion products in the steam generators. The goal was to correct a high level condition in the steam generators which restricted power operations. The evolution was well coordinated and controlled, and plant response was normal. Overall, the conduct of operations were performed in a professional manner, with appropriate management attention and involvement.

Radiological Controls

Routine observations of radiological controls were conducted throughout the inspection period. No significant weaknesses were noted.

Maintenance/Surveillance

The licensee continues to maintain appropriate management involvement and control. Review of the licensee action concerning the steam generator leak rate anomaly indicated timely resolution of the problem. Review of a surveillance accomplished on the heat sink protection system (HSPS) that caused an auto initiation of emergency feedwater indicated a weakness in the licensee's ability to identify problems with the system. It appears that the licensee had not functionally tested the system as thoroughly as necessary following significant modifications.

Emergency Preparedness

Leak rate measurements at the time of the primary to secondary leak were below the threshold for declaration of an unusual event. No significant weaknesses were noted.

Security

Routine review of security was conducted. No significant weaknesses were noted.

Engineering and Technical Support

A review of the technical evaluation report for the reactor vessel head boron corrosion problem was conducted. The licensee submittal of a request for temporary waiver of compliance for the additional OTSG tube inspections indicated that the necessary documentation was established. Licensee action to establish control of plant systems to prevent loss of the decay heat removal capability was complete and comprehensive.