

March 1, 1994

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-IV-94-005

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region IV staff on this date.

Facility

Houston Lighting & Power Co.  
South Texas 1  
Wadsworth, Texas  
Dockets: 50-498

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event  
Alert  
Site Area Emergency  
General Emergency  
X Not Applicable

Subject: REACTOR TRIP

South Texas Project (STP) Unit 1 was manually tripped by control room operators at 10:13 p.m. (CST) on February 28, 1994. The unit had been operating at 28 percent power when Feedwater Regulating Valve D failed shut. When operators were unable to restore manual control of the valve, a manual trip was inserted, prior to reaching a low steam generator level, which would have automatically tripped the reactor. All four auxiliary feedwater pumps started, as expected, and all other systems functioned normally following the trip.

Currently, the unit is in Mode 3, at normal operating temperature and pressure, steaming to the main condenser via the steam dumps, with feedwater being provided by the electric-driven startup feedwater pump. The cause of the failure of the feedwater regulating valve is suspected to be a failed coil in the circuitry that controls instrument air to the valve's actuator. The licensee will further troubleshoot and repair the feedwater regulating valve, complete posttrip reviews, and resolve an issue unrelated to the reactor trip involving a letdown isolation valve failing to fully open when stroked from the control room. The date of restart is unknown at this time.

Both units at STP were shut down under a Confirmatory Action Letter from February 4, 1993, until February 15, 1994, due to problems discovered with the turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pumps. Additional licensee and NRC-identified problems resulted in the extensive shutdown. Unit 1 restarted on February 18, 1994, following the lifting of the Confirmatory Action Letter; Unit 2 remains shutdown, with a projected restart date later this spring.

The augmented resident inspector staff has provided 24-hour inspection coverage of control room operations since February 15, 1994, and was in the control room and observed the reactor trip and posttrip recovery.

The licensee plans to issue a press release.

The state of Texas will be informed.

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Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the licensee at 11:27 p.m. (CST). Region IV has informed NRR, EDO, and PA. This information has been confirmed with a licensee representative.

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