

MAR 4 1994

Docket No. 50-271

Mr. Donald A. Reid
Vice President, Operations
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
RD 5, Box 169
Ferry Road
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

Dear Mr. Reid:

SUBJECT: INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-271/94-03

This letter refers to announced safety inspections conducted by Messrs. Thomas J. Kenny, Peter D. Drysdale, and Leonard J. Privity of this office on January 24-27, and February 10-11, 1994. These inspections included a review of the inservice testing activities at the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant, Vernon, Vermont, and observations of your service water system self-assessment. Mr. Kenny discussed the inservice testing inspection findings with Mr. R. J. Wanczyk, Vermont Yankee Plant Manager on January 27, 1994. Mr. Privity discussed the NRC's observations concerning your service water self-assessment with Mr. J. Pelletier on February 11, 1994.

This letter also refers to a review of the operability of the alternate cooling system conducted in NRC Region I offices between January 5 and February 15, 1994, by Mr. Fred L. Bower, III. The results of this review were discussed in telephone conferences with Mr. J. Pelletier and other members of your staff on February 14 and 16, 1994.

The inspection was directed toward areas important to public health and safety. Areas examined during this inspection are described in the NRC Region I Inspection Report 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.

Our inspector observed that the improvements made to your inservice test program for safety-related pumps and valves adequately resolved the weaknesses previously-identified by the NRC Operational Safety Team Inspection 50-271/93-80, as discussed in Section 4.0 of the enclosed report.

Our inspectors concluded that your service water system self-assessment was detailed, it met all but two inspection attributes of the NRC's Temporary Instruction 2515/118 and identified several significant safety concerns. However, our inspectors noted your short term actions to address the assessment findings, including evaluation of the operability of both the service

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water system and alternate cooling system, were slow. A telephone conference call was held on February 14, 1994, between NRC staff and your representatives to discuss the short term actions to address the findings of the self-assessment team. On February 16, 1994, your representatives provided the rationale for demonstrating the interim operability of the service water system and alternate cooling system. This rationale for interim operability was subsequently reviewed by your plant operations review committee on February 24, 1994, and recommended for approval for the plant manager. Your representatives also stated that the short and long term dispositions for the self-assessment team findings will be formally presented to the NRC in a meeting currently scheduled for March 1994.

Our inspectors also reviewed your responses to NRC questions regarding the operability of the alternate cooling system, documented in a letter dated December 16, 1993. This review, in conjunction with the system's licensing bases, and NRC inspection findings dating back to 1990, indicated that the actions you have taken to assure the alternate cooling system's operability were inadequate. Specifically, we reconfirmed that you did not have a test program to ensure the operability of the manual isolation valves in the residual heat removal portion of the service water (RHRSW) system, as previously documented in unresolved item 90-80-06. We also concluded that the bases that you provided for the closure of Unresolved Item 90-80-06 were inadequate and this unresolved item should be reopened to assure satisfactory implementation of a test program to verify the operability of the above manual isolation valves. On February 17, 1994, your representatives stated that the manual isolation valves would be incorporated in the facility's inservice test (IST) program and would be periodically tested in accordance with the NRC position for testing such valves. Pending incorporation of these valves in the IST program for periodic testing to verify operability, unresolved item 90-80-06 will remain open.

If your understanding of any actions stated in this letter or the enclosed report is different, please inform me of such differences immediately.

Your cooperation with us is appreciated.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Dr. Plackeel K. Eppen, Chief
Systems Section
Engineering Branch
Division of Reactor Safety

Enclosure: NRC Inspection Report No. 50-271/94-03

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cc w/encl:

R. Wanczyk, Plant Manager
J. Thayer, Vice President, Yankee Atomic Electric Company
L. Tremblay, Senior Licensing Engineer, Yankee Atomic Electric Company
J. Gilroy, Director, Vermont Public Interest Research Group, Inc.
D. Tefft, Administrator, Bureau of Radiological Health, State of New Hampshire
Chief, Safety Unit, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
R. Gad, Esquire
G. Bisbee, Esquire
R. Sedano, Vermont Department of Public Service
T. Rapone, Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety
Public Document Room (PDR)
Local Public Document Room (LPDR)
Nuclear Safety Information Center (NSIC)
K. Abraham, PAO (2)
NRC Resident Inspector
State of New Hampshire, SLO Designee
State of Vermont, SLO Designee
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, SLO Designee

bcc w/encl:

Region I Docket Room (with concurrences)
E. Kelly, DRP
J. Shedlowsky, DRP

bcc w/encl (VIA E-MAIL):

V. McCree, OEDO
D. Dorman, NRR
W. Butler, NRR
M. Shannon, ILPB

RI:DRS
Kenny
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Bower
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Eaton
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