

In reply Refer To:
Docket: 50-298/90-21

SEP 18 1990

Nebraska Public Power District
ATTN: George A. Trevors, Senior Staff
Advisor - Nuclear Power Group
P.O. Box 499
Columbus, Nebraska 68602-0499

Gentlemen:

This forwards the report of the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) for Cooper Nuclear Station. The SALP Board met on August 21, 1990, to evaluate Cooper Nuclear Station's performance for the period April 16, 1989, through July 15, 1990. The performance analysis and resulting evaluations are documented in the enclosed initial SALP Board report.

In accordance with NRC policy, I have reviewed the SALP Board assessment and concur with their ratings. It is my view that your conduct of nuclear activities in connection with Cooper Nuclear Station was acceptable and, overall, I am pleased with the continued high level of performance in the areas of plant operations and radiological controls. I am also pleased with the positive steps that have been taken to improve the safety assessment and quality verification area. These steps have resulted in an increase in the SALP rating in this area from a Category 3 last SALP period to a Category 2 this SALP period. In addition, improved performance in the areas of maintenance and surveillance, security, and emergency preparedness was noteworthy. I draw your attention, though, to a common theme throughout our evaluation, which indicates a need to improve the training area. Highlights of the report are set forth below:

- (1) The areas of plant operations and radiological controls maintained Category 1 ratings indicating a continued high level of performance in those functional areas.
- (2) The areas of maintenance/surveillance, emergency preparedness, and security received Category 2 ratings with improving trends. This reflects an improvement from the Category 2 ratings received during the previous SALP period. In the area of maintenance/surveillance, surveillance activities were considered a strength. Maintenance programs were identified as weak during a maintenance team inspection, but program improvements were being implemented. However, insufficient time had elapsed to determine the effectiveness of these program improvements. In the area of security the SALP Board noted significant improvements in the security programs, hardware, and self-assessment capability.
- (3) Performance in the engineering/technical support functional area continued at a Category 2 rating. Corporate engineering has improved the

*SRI WRBennett 9/ /90	*C:DRP/C GLConstable 9/ /90	<i>[Signature]</i> D:DRP SJCcollins 9/18/90	*D:DRS LJCallan 9/ /90	*D:DRSS ABBeach 9/ /90	*NRR PO'Connor 9/ /90
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*previously concurred
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timeliness of plant operability calls and support of routine plant activities. However, there exists strong evidence of training weaknesses, and performance on recent operator license examinations has declined. Poor morale was noted in the training department, and the actual staffing level was less than authorized.

- (4) The area of safety assessment/quality verification received a Category 2 rating reflecting improvements from the Category 3 rating received during the previous SALP period. Although positive changes occurred within the quality assurance staff, you should determine whether a performance based QA plan can be adequately implemented with your present resources, while maintaining the necessary auditor qualifications and technical expertise. A lack of technical expertise on the QA staff was identified in several functional areas.

A management meeting has been scheduled with you and your staff at 1:30 p.m. on October 9, 1990, at your facility to review the results of the SALP. Within 30 days of this management meeting, you may provide written comments on, and amplification of, as appropriate, the initial SALP report. Your comments, a summary of our meeting, and my disposition of your comments will be issued as an appendix to the enclosed initial SALP report and will constitute the final SALP report.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

John M. Montgomery

Robert D. Martin
Regional Administrator

Enclosure:
Initial SALP Board Report
50-298/90-21

cc w/Enclosure:
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Nebraska Department of Environmental
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ATTN: Dennis Grams, Director
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Nemaha County Board of Commissioners

ATTN: Larry Bohlken, Chairman
Nemaha County Courthouse
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Nebraska Department of Health

ATTN: Harold Borchert, Director
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Kansas Radiation Control Program Director

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

ATTN: Senior Resident Inspector
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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

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