



# Georgia Institute of Technology

NEELY NUCLEAR RESEARCH CENTER

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USA

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February 18, 1994

Mr. S. Ebnetter  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. NRC Region II, Suite 2900  
101 Marietta Street, N.W.  
Atlanta, GA 30323

Dear Mr. Ebnetter:

In accordance with our Technical Specifications 1.14.h which defines a reportable occurrence as:

"An observed inadequacy in the implementation of administrative or procedural controls such that the inadequacy causes or threatens to cause the existence or development of an unsafe condition in connection with the operation of the plant",

I wish to report to you that a reportable occurrence took place on February 15, 1994, involving Mr. William Downs, an SRO at the GTRR.

The specifics of the event are described in a memo from Mr. Dixon Parker (SRO) to me. The memo is attached. At a meeting held at Georgia Tech on February 16, 1994, with Mr. J. Philip Stohr and others of his staff, I reported the occurrence.

I gave a copy of Mr. Parker's memo to me to Mr. Downs and asked him to read carefully and tell me if he agrees with its content. He told me that the memo was factual and accurate.

I told Mr. Downs that I am recommending to my supervisor, that a committee of independent faculty members be established to evaluate his performance as a Senior Reactor Operator. This committee will afford Mr. Downs ample chance to explain his actions and/or inactions relevant to requirements in approved procedures.

Commencing on 2/16/94 and continuing during the deliberation of the committee, Mr. Downs will not be used as a reactor operator.

His status as SRO at the GTRR will be determined after the committee makes its recommendations.

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Date: 2/16/94

To: Dr. R. A. Karam, Director, NNRC

From: Dixon F. Parker, Research Engineer I, NNRC 

Subject: Inoperative Scrams During Reactor Operation on 2/15/94

On 2/15/94 at 13:02 a reactor startup was commenced. Present in the control were Bill Downs, Nick Jenkins, Jeremy Sweezy, Neil Copeland, and myself. Bill Downs was the Senior Operator on Duty and the operator on the console, I was the Operator on Duty and the observing operator. The others were present as GTRR trainees. Jeremy Sweezy was performing the startup under the guidance of Bill Downs. After startup, but prior to criticality Jeremy noticed three jumpers remained in the jumper panel. These were:

1. TBA-29 to TBA-30 Low D<sub>2</sub>O Flow Channel 2 Scram Inhibit.
2. TBA-69 to TBA-82 Automatic D<sub>2</sub>O Level Reset.
3. TBA-89 to TBA-98 Reactor Isolation Valves Not Open Scram Inhibit.

The jumpers were removed and the startup proceeded. I examined the Tech Specs and then informed Billy D. Statham, Reactor Supervisor, of the occurrence.

Following the reactor shutdown at 14:49 on the same day, Nick Jenkins commenced a Reactor Shutdown Checklist and noticed a problem with temperature recorder TR-2. After inspection it appeared that the recorder had been left off since prior to the startup. This was confirmed by Bill Downs. When the recorder is off the following scrams are inoperative:

1. Shield Coolant High Temperature Scram.
2. Bismuth Coolant High Temperature Scram.

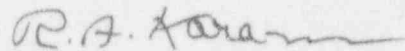
I informed Billy Statham of the condition.

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I will keep the NRC informed of the decisions we make regarding this case.

Should you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R.A. Karam", with a stylized flourish at the end.

R.A. Karam, Ph.D., Director  
Neely Nuclear Research Center

RAK/ccg

cc: Dr. Gary Poehlein