



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION IV  
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 1000  
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011

DEC 17 1990

Docket Nos. 50-313 and 50-368  
License Nos. DPR-51 and NPF-6  
EA 90-175

Entergy Operations, Inc.  
ATTN: Mr. N. S. Carns, Vice President  
Operations, Arkansas Nuclear One  
Route 3, Box 137G  
Russellville, Arkansas 72801

Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF VIOLATION AND PROPOSED IMPOSITION OF CIVIL PENALTY - \$50,000  
(NRC INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-313 & 50-368/90-38)

This refers to the special NRC inspection conducted on October 1-5, 1990, at the Arkansas Nuclear One (ANO) facility operated by Entergy Operations, Inc. (Entergy Operations), to follow up on previously identified NRC concerns relating to operability of the control room emergency ventilation system (C.R.VS). The results of this inspection were provided to you in an NRC inspection report dated October 16, 1990, and were discussed with you and other Entergy Operations representatives at an Enforcement Conference on October 30, 1990.

The inspection focused on the ability of the control room ventilation dampers to function in the event of the loss of normal instrument air. This issue was initially identified by the NRC during an Operational Safety Team Inspection (OSTI) conducted September 10-21, 1990. In addition to the system operability concern, an issue regarding the accuracy of ANO's response to NRC Generic Letter (GL) 88-14, "Instrument Air Supply System Problems Affecting Safety-Related Equipment," was identified.

Subsequent investigation by your staff indicated that the CREVS may not have been able to perform its intended safety function since the time when damper air accumulators were installed in 1978. Post-modification testing failed to identify the system performance deficiency when normal instrument air (IA) is unavailable. Of equal concern from a regulatory perspective is the fact that on August 8, 1988, GL 88-14 informed all NRC reactor licensees of a generic problem with regard to safety systems reliant on instrument air. The GL requested all licensees to perform a design and operability verification of the instrument air system, including verification by test that air-operated safety-related components would perform as expected under normal conditions and upon loss of the normal IA system. A written response confirming that the above verifications were conducted was required to be submitted under oath or affirmation.

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Arkansas Power & Light Company (AP&L), the predecessor licensee to Entergy Operations, provided inaccurate information to the NRC in its March 7, 1989 response to GL 88-14. Specifically, AP&L stated that each safety-related component encompassed by the generic letter "has an associated surveillance test which is conducted on a regular basis to verify the operability of that component" and that the "current surveillances conducted at ANO on "Q" components, we believe, adequately verifies the operability of air-operated IAS components and simulates a complete loss of instrument air for the components being tested." These statements were not accurate in the case of the reserve air accumulators. AP&L failed to recognize that the safety-related air reserve accumulators for the control room isolation dampers were not subject to any periodic testing requirements and had never been tested. This failure was due in part to an inadequate engineering evaluation, coupled with the lack of a clearly documented plant design basis. This is a significant regulatory concern because the inadequate evaluation of the GL 88-14 concerns resulted in the facility operating for an additional two years with the control room isolation function degraded.

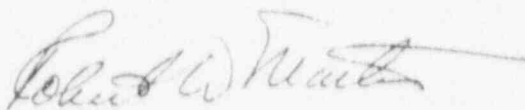
To emphasize the need for effective management and engineering controls to ensure that information related to potential safety-system problems is adequately reviewed and accurately reported to the NRC, and that appropriate corrective action is taken, I have been authorized, after consultation with the Director, Office of Enforcement, and the Deputy Executive Director for Nuclear Reactor Regulation, Regional Operations and Research, to issue the enclosed Notice of Violation and Proposed Imposition of Civil Penalty (Notice) in the amount of \$50,000 for the Severity Level III problem described in the enclosed Notice. The base value of a civil penalty for a Severity Level III problem is \$50,000. The escalation and mitigation factors in the Enforcement Policy were considered.

The base civil penalty was escalated by 50% because the NRC identified the control room isolation damper problem instead of AP&L, the predecessor licensee, which should have identified it two years earlier. However, 50% mitigation was applied for the prompt and comprehensive corrective action taken by Entergy Operations, the successor licensee, once the problem was identified. Those actions included modification of the control room isolation system, testing, enhancement of procedural guidance to ensure complete and accurate responses when communicating with the NRC, and initiation of a review of prior NRC submittals (1988 and 1989) for possible errors. Also, a number of significant licensee programs have previously been initiated to document the plant design configuration and design basis and upgrade surveillance testing. These actions were initiated to address the root causes of past problems that were the subject of escalated enforcement action (EA 88-284). In recognition of those actions, your recent initiatives to improve engineering and technical support, as well as your improved operating philosophy, which collectively are viewed as positive changes that should prevent similar problems from occurring in the future, we have decided not to further escalate the civil penalty based on past performance and duration.

You are required to respond to this letter and should follow the instructions specified in the enclosed Notice when preparing your response. In your response, you should document the specific actions taken and any additional actions you plan to prevent recurrence. After reviewing your response to this Notice, including your proposed corrective actions and the results of future inspections, the NRC will determine whether further NRC enforcement action is necessary to ensure compliance with NRC regulatory requirements.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room. The responses directed by this letter and the enclosed Notice are not subject to the clearance procedures of the Office of Management and Budget as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, Pub. L. No. 96-511.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Martin  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure:  
Notice of Violation

cc w/encl:  
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-4-

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Honorable Joe W. Phillips  
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Pope County Courthouse  
Russellville, Arkansas 72801

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