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GE Nuclear Energy

General Electric Company
175 Curtiss Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704

December 10, 1990
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Director of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Mail Station P1-137
Washington, D. C. 20555

Attention Carl H. Berlinger, Chief
Generic Communications Branch

Subject: Documentation of Telephone Notification

Please find the attached memo of a telephone call to the NRC in October, 1990. The call provided information about a Feedwater line break which occurred at an overseas plant.

Very truly yours,

G. B. Stramback
Safety Evaluation Programs Manager
M/C 187, (408) 925-1913

Attachment

cc: L. S. Gifford (GE-Rockville)
P. W. Marriott (GE)
R. C. Mitchell (GE)
R. A. Hermann (USNRC)
PSC File

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MEMO OF TELEPHONE CALL

Date of Memo: Dec 5, 1990
Date of Call: October, 1990
Person Calling: S. Ranganath
Person Called: Bob Hermann (NRC-NRR, 301-492-0768)
Subject: Overseas Utility Feedwater Line Failure

Background

In December 1989, an overseas plant experienced a reactor scram due to low water level in the reactor, determined later to be the result of a failure in the feedwater pump suction pipe. The failure was in a carbon steel line near a flow venturi and resulted in a tear of approximately 150 mm by 250 mm. The event was reported to the Nuclear Regulatory Authority in the overseas country. GE was informed about the event later with details coming to us in early 1990 during a visit to GE by the overseas utility personnel. The failure was believed to be due to erosion/corrosion (E/C) and was outside the Class 1 boundary. E/C failures of this type near flow meters are not uncommon in carbon steel piping, especially when the oxygen content is low. The high velocity near the flow venturi increases the potential for E/C. The E/C issue is addressed by NUREG-1344 and NRC Generic Letter 89-08. Thus there was no follow up action required. Later, we felt that one aspect of the problem, that it led to a virtual break rather than a leak was significant. Therefore, G. M. Gordon and S. Ranganath concluded that the NRC should be informed about the details of the overseas utility event.

Details of the Telephone call

Bob Hermann of the NRC-NRR materials branch was called to inform the NRC of the overseas utility pipe failure. The writer does not recall the date of the conversation except for a guess that it was in October, 1990. When the details of the failure, i.e. erosion/corrosion appearance, high flow rate, low oxygen and carbon steel pipe, were described, Bob did not seem to be surprised. He said that he was aware of similar problems near flow venturis and did not feel that it represented a "new" finding. When asked if the overseas regulatory authorities had informed their US NRC counterparts about the event, he indicated that he was unaware of any communication from the overseas regulatory agency. The conversation ended with Hermann thanking GE for keeping him informed.

bcc: G. M. Gordon
S. A. Ranganath