



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

December 10, 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: James Y. Vorse, Director
Office of Investigations
Region II

FROM: James C. Stone, Chief
Program Development and Reactive
Inspection Section
Vendor Inspection Branch
Division of Reactor Inspection and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: ALLEGED SUPPRESSION OF INFORMATION BY TVA
NUCLEAR SAFETY REVIEW STAFF

As requested by Larry Robinson of your staff, I have reviewed a number of documents and participated in some interviews of NSRS management personnel on the issue of suppression of information. The purpose of these reviews was to determine whether or not safety significant information was purposefully left out of NSRS reports or reports not issued because of information they contained. The results of my reviews are enclosed.

If you have any questions, please call me.

James C. Stone, Chief
Program Development and Reactive
Inspection Section
Vendor Inspection Branch
Division of Reactor Inspection and Safeguards
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Enclosure:
As stated

ENCLOSURE

Issue No. 1:

The transmittal letter to an NSRS report of investigation into the termination of both a contractor and a permanent TVA employee allegedly indicated that these terminations were proper when the report itself indicated that the termination of the permanent TVA employee was improper.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. Transmittal Letter
2. NSRS Investigation Report
3. Transcript of OI interview of H. N. Culver
4. Transcript of OI interview of M. A. Harrison
5. OI results of interview of W. Mason

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Minimal.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

The transmittal letter was misleading as to the contents of the investigation report, but the report was available for review by addressee, therefore, there was no suppression of information.

Issue No. 2:

The decision on the part of NSRS management to not issue an NSRS report on TVA's Corrective Action Program.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. Draft of the report titled, "Major Management Review of Corrective Action."
2. OI Results of Interview of Arthur G. Debbage
3. OI Results of Interview of Robert J. Griffin
4. OI Results of Interview of Horace W. Bennett
5. OI Results of Interview of Joan T. Muecke
6. Transcript of OI Interview of Richard Smith
7. Transcript of OI Interview of Kermit Whitt

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Significant because it pointed out weaknesses in the TVA system that would be used for correction of deficiencies.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

Other than the fact that the report itself was not published, there was no definitive indication of internal suppression by NSRS management. The reasons

given by NSRS management for not issuing the report were that a major rewrite would be necessary, the organizations discussed in the report had been restructured, and that TVA nuclear power upper management had agreed to do a more current review within 3-5 months of the date of the decision not to publish.

Issue No. 3:

An NSRS staff member stated that the NSRS Director told him that the NRC Region II Administrator had been critical of the NSRS Director for allowing too many "purple words" (i.e. radically descriptive adjectives) in the NSRS report of the Sequoyah Thimble Tube Event.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. Results of Interview of Gerald Brantley
2. Transcript of OI Interview of Kermit Whitt
3. Sworn Statement of James P. O'Reilly
4. NSRS Report on Sequoyah Thimble Tube Event

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Significant because it could have led to changing report contents.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

No indication of suppression by the NRC Regional Administrator or by NSRS Management was found.

Issue No. 4:

NSRS staff members were concerned that the NSRS Director signed as concurring with a TVA Policy Committee Letter concerning the Black and Veatch (B&V) Independent Design Review (IDR), knowing that his staff took exception with statements made in the letter. The NSRS staff independently investigated the status of the B&V IDR findings and concluded that the Policy Committee Letter down-played the significance and status of resolution of the IDR findings.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. TVA Policy Committee Letter regarding Black and Veatch IDR
2. NSRS Report on Black and Veatch IDR
3. Results of OI Interview of Doug Hornstra
4. Results of OI Interview of Jerry Smith
5. Results of OI Interview of Claude Key
6. Results of OI Interview of Phil Washer
7. Results of OI Interview of John Mashburn
8. Transcript of OI Interview of James Murdock
9. Transcript of OI Interview of Kermit Whitt
10. Transcript of OI Interview of H. N. Culver
11. Results of OI Interview of E. Gray Beasley

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Significant.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

The Policy Committee Letter is misleading in that it down-plays the significance of the B&V IDR findings and indicates a large majority of the findings were in the process of being corrected. However, the NSRS did issue an independent assessment of the B&V IDR that took exception with some of the findings reached in the Policy Committee Letter. Because this NSRS report was issued, no suppression occurred.

Issue No. 5

An NSRS staff member was concerned that the details of his report regarding cable installation at Watts Bar was going to be summarized by NSRS management such that the impact of his findings would be eliminated.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. NSRS Report No. I-85-06-WBN
2. Results of OI Interview of Mansour Guity
3. Results of OI Interview of Michael Harrison
4. Transcript of OI Interview of Kermit Whitt

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Low, provided the findings were issued.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

Final report issued in the form desired by the staff member, therefore no suppression occurred. The circumstances surrounding NSRS Management's consideration of issuance of a summary report indicate that such consideration was logical.

Issue No. 6:

NSRS Staff Member concerned that the Director, NSRS suppressed information that should have gone to the TVA General Manager and/or the Board regarding pipe support calculations that had been destroyed. The Staff Member contended that these calculations were a required part of Quality Assurance records pertaining to these pipe supports, and that this issue would not have been resolved by TVA had the media not publicized it.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. Results of Interview of Phillip Washer
2. Transcript of Interview of H. N. Culver
3. NSRS Report No. R-84-07-WBN, concerning Missing Pipe Support Calculations at Watts Bar

4. Draft of Memorandum from Culver to Willis (General Manager, TVA), prepared by Washer, regarding a dispute between NSRS and Line Management over the pipe support calculations.

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Significant.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

There is an indication that the TVA Line Organization disagreed with NSRS on this issue, and that a resolution of this disagreement was not produced until after it was publicized in the media. However, the final report on the missing pipe support calculations was issued, therefore, information concerning the missing calculations was documented and available. Because the report was issued, suppression of information did not occur. Whether or not the publishing of articles in the local newspaper caused TVA to take any action in this case was not determined.

Issue No. 7:

An NSRS staff member was concerned that a report that he had written pertaining to 10 CFR 50, Appendix R, Fire Protection, had not been issued.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. Draft of NSRS Report No. R-84-24-NPS, "Review of TVA's Experience in the Implementation of 10 CFR 50, Appendix R
2. Results of OI interview of Jerry D. Smith
3. Results of OI interview of John W. Mashburn

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Moderate.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

The draft report contained generalizations and opinions about TVA's fire protection history and what should be done, in general, to be better in the future. It would have been of minimal value to TVA management. The decision by NSRS management not to issue the report appears to be reasonable.

Issue No. 8:

Two NSRS staff members were concerned that the NSRS design review of the Residual Heat Removal (RHR) system at Bellefonte Nuclear Plant was terminated prematurely and then never restarted without a report of the work completed to the point of termination.

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

1. Results of OI interview of Doug Hornstra
2. Results of OI interview of Vencil O'Block
3. Transcript of OI interview of Kermit Whitt

SAFETY SIGNIFICANCE:

Indeterminate.

OPINION AS TO SUPPRESSION:

The NSRS staff was taken off the Bellefonte review to handle the large increase in employee concerns. It appears that NSRS management was exercising their prerogative to reassign staff to handle the increased work load and to not issue a report on a partially completed review.

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW WITH CLAUDE M. KEY, JR.
ON JANUARY 9-10, 1986 AS PREPARED BY
INVESTIGATOR LARRY L. ROBINSON

On January 9-10, 1986, Claude M. KEY, Jr., Engineer, Office of Nuclear Power Mechanical Maintenance at the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Watts Bar Nuclear Plant (WBN), was interviewed by NRC Investigator Larry L. Robinson in the office of the NRC Resident Inspector at WBN.

KEY stated that his residence address () residence telephone () He stated that he has been in the Mechanical Maintenance Division at WBN since July 1985. He stated that he has been a TVA employee since September 1972, having first been assigned to the Engineering Design Branch (Instrumentation) at the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant. He stated that in January 1975 he did mechanical engineering work in construction at WBN. In March 1977, he was in the Mechanical Engineering Branch doing principle piping contract administration. In November 1977, he went into construction engineering at Phipps Bend doing Quality Assurance (QA) engineering and was a Mechanical Engineering Group Leader. He stated that in September 1981, he went into NSRS and was there until July 1985 when he went to Nuclear Power Mechanical Maintenance at WBN.

He stated that around November and December 1981, he was involved in a mini-management review at WBN. He stated that he thought the Report Number was R-81-022-WBN. He stated that Jim CRITTENDON was the Review Team Leader and after the mini-management review had been completed, CRITTENDON called an internal NSRS meeting of Marvin SINKULE, Newt CULVER, Jim JONES, Claude Y, and Ron TRAVIS. They discussed the findings of the review. KEY advised that there was agreement among this group on the findings.

KEY advised that at the exit meeting, there were many WBN line management people. He stated that when the findings of the mini-management review were announced, some of the line people stated that if these findings were published, WBN construction would be shut down.

KEY stated that on the Monday following the exit meeting, Marv SINKULE had a closed door meeting with CRITTENDON. KEY stated that suddenly the next day (Tuesday) the entire team was back at WBN re-substantiating their review findings. KEY stated that he thought that the report on the mini-management review was addressed to a Mr. MULL, who was then the TVA Construction Manager. KEY added that he thought that approximately six months later, another team of NSRS reviewers followed up on the findings in that report.

KEY stated that in addition to NSRS apparently being backed down by line management regarding the mini-management review at WBN, and the team having to go out and re-substantiate findings, another item that he wanted to discuss regarding his activities while in NSRS was in regard to a review of electrical items at Bellefonte while working with another NSRS Investigator, Charlie SNOOP, who has since been deceased.

Information in this record was deleted
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Portions

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KEY stated that he was reviewing craft training, inspection processes, and various individual problems that had been discovered in the electrical area at Bellefonte when Willie BROWN, who was the Office of Engineering, Design and Construction Site Manager at Bellefonte at that time, requested that NSRS investigate an allegation of sabotage of electrical items at Bellefonte.

KEY stated that he and SNOOP found that electrical workers were intentionally sabotaging conduit by removing tie down straps, bolts, and actually taking down the conduit, etc., in order to make a certain foreman look bad.

KEY stated that NSRS Director, Newt CULVER, told both he and SNOOP not to include the sabotage findings in their report of these electrical items. CULVER told SNOOP to cover these sabotage items verbally with Willie BROWN.

KEY felt that, especially since BROWN, himself, had requested the investigation into the sabotage allegations, that this should be made a part of the formal report, but it was not.

KEY stated that the next item he wished to discuss concerned his review of an Institute of Nuclear Power Operations (INPO) finding that inspectors were being discouraged from writing non-conformance reports (NCRs) at Bellefonte. He stated that this review occurred sometime around May 1984. He stated that allegedly, QC management was doing the discouraging of these inspectors from writing NCRs.

KEY stated that BROWN had some craft people put into the first line supervision of the QC group at Bellefonte. He advised that the inspectors really did not have an immediate problem, but that he (KEY) saw a potential conflict of interest with the craft people supervising QC inspectors.

KEY stated that he wanted to address this item in his report. He stated that he did not want to list it as a finding, but just to mention the potential conflict of interest.

KEY stated that Mike HARRISON told him that Newt CULVER said to take the reference to that conflict out of the report and that a separate memo to BROWN should be written.

KEY stated that he drafted this memo to BROWN and that he still has the original unsigned memo. He stated that it never went out. KEY stated that he thinks that HARRISON told him that the decision was made not to mention this to BROWN at all.

KEY stated that those were all of the problems that he had with NSRS management directly, but that he had some other items in which other NSRS investigators were involved that bothered him that he wanted to discuss. He stated that he was very unhappy with the investigation that had been done by NSRS over the termination of [REDACTED]. He stated that HARRISON, SNOOP, Jim JONES, and Ron TRAVIS did this investigation.

KEY advised that the background that initiated this investigation was that (rejection notices) had been terminated because they had written some on pipe supports that were based on information from the craft rather than on actual inspection of the pipe supports themselves.

KEY stated that the whole NSRS team mentioned above, wrote a report that concluded that there was an improper action by TVA in the firing of both

KEY advised that OGC reviewed this report and wanted to make changes in the report that would have essentially reversed the NSRS finding. He advised that the NSRS team members would not change their minds and would only sign the report if it went out the way they wanted. KEY stated that since they would only sign the report in that form, it was published as such, but that a cover letter written by CULVER that transmitted the report essentially said that TVA management has the prerogative to terminate, and that the termination decision was proper. KEY stated that the cover letter disagreed entirely with the report findings.

KEY stated that the next item he wanted to discuss was the NSRS review of the Black and Veatch report. He stated that he believed that this report compared the Black and Veatch findings to the TVA response to these findings. He stated that he believed that all of the NSRS Technical Analysis Review Section (TARS) were involved in this comparison.

KEY advised that all of these NSRS people found that some of the Black and Veatch findings that had also been discovered earlier by other activities at TVA, for example NSRS and OQA, or even NRC, were being denied as being valid findings by TVA.

KEY stated that he knows of no official NSRS report on their review of the Black and Veatch findings, but that he does know that a memorandum was written, with CULVER's approval, saying that the vast majority of Black and Veatch findings are no problem, even though some of these same findings had been identified as problems by different TVA organizations and NRC at an earlier date.

KEY stated that the next item he wanted to discuss was a TVA independent Electrical Task Force that published a report regarding the electrical situation at Bellefonte Nuclear Plant. He stated that current NSRS employee Gary OWEN and also a consultant by the name of Fred BENDER were on this TVA Task Force.

KEY stated that he as an NSRS employee at that time, also did a review of the electrical situation at Bellefonte. He stated that the title of the report that he published was "Review of INPO Finding QP5.1".

KEY stated that he found a lot of problems with the non-conformance reporting (NCR) process at Bellefonte. He stated that previously, Bellefonte had what was known as a Quality Control Inspection Reports (QCIR) which were given to Engineering for determination if an NCR was necessary on that QCIR.

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KEY stated that the present system eliminated the QCIR's. He stated that now there are Inspection Rejection Notices (IRN) and that inspectors were not supposed to document any condition that they observed other than what they were scheduled to inspect. He stated that this IRN system and the situation of inspectors not being able to document discrepancies that they had not initially set out to inspect, led to a number of memoranda and informal documents on indeterminate conditions. He stated that he also discovered that NCRs on the electrical system at Bellefonte were being improperly voided. He stated for example he saw NCRs being closed prior to the corrective action being completed. He stated that the method that they were closed was as follows: The NCR would be closed to a Field Change Request (FCR) and the FCR may never have been completed or closed.

KEY stated that he also found in his review that there was no tracking of off-site NCRs or material that was delivered to a nuclear site.

KEY stated that the TVA independent Electrical Task Force Review report indicated that the electrical situation at Bellefonte was fine. He stated that all the members of the NSRS TARS group took exception to the report that this Task Force put out. KEY stated that the task force report said that there was nothing of significance wrong with the electrical systems and documentation at Bellefonte.

KEY said that the next item he wished to discuss involved a report that had been written by Charlie SNOOP. He stated that SNOOP had written a procedure to do wire check verifications of electrical panels and instrument panels after they had arrived on-site.

KEY stated that Marvin SINKULE assigned SNOOP to do a review of this wiring. He said that SNOOP did the review and wrote a report in late 1981 or early 1982. KEY stated that there were definitely some negative findings in this report, but that the report was never published. KEY stated that he did not know directly from first hand experience whether or not SNOOP's report had been published, but that he had received feedback from SNOOP, prior to SNOOP's death, in which SNOOP indicated that SINKULE had decided not to publish the report. KEY stated that he could not remember whether or not SNOOP told him why SINKULE had decided not to publish the report.

KEY advised that the last area of concern that he had was a report that he had written on the Employee Concern Program at Bellefonte Nuclear Plant. He advised that he had been involved in this Employee Concern Program from December 1983 through January 1984. He stated that during the first six months of this period things seemed to be working fine; however, at that point his employee concern location was put in a place on-site that was not convenient for employees access at all. KEY said that he was very dissatisfied with this and went to the Bellefonte Project Manager, Lonnie COX, and was able to get the employee concern trailer moved close to the main entrance.

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW WITH GERALD G. BRANTLEY
ON MARCH 13, 1986 AS PREPARED BY INVESTIGATOR
LARRY L. ROBINSON

On March 13, 1986, Gerald G. BRANTLEY, Nuclear Engineer, Nuclear Safety Review Staff (NSRS), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Knoxville, TN, was interviewed at the Watts Bar Nuclear Plant site by NRC Investigator Larry L. Robinson. BRANTLEY provided the following information:

BRANTLEY stated that he was currently involved in the Watts Bar Plant Employee Concern Task Force with NSRS, and has been an NSRS member since December 1981. BRANTLEY stated that he was first employed with TVA in August 1971. He stated that he was first assigned to the Radiological Hygiene Branch as an H/P Technician for one year. He advised that from 1972 to December 1981 he was assigned to Nuclear Power Operations as both an Associated Chemical Engineer and a Chemical Engineer at the Browns Ferry and Watts Bar Nuclear Plants.

BRANTLEY stated that from August 1966 to August 1971 he was at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, involved in health physics and nuclear chemistry. He stated that prior to that he was in the U.S. Navy nuclear program.

BRANTLEY advised that during his tenure in NSRS, he has not been harassed, intimidated, or discriminated against in any way by NSRS management. He stated that, quite to the contrary, he has been well rewarded for the work he has done in NSRS. He advised that he came to NSRS as an M-4 and was promoted to an M-5 in two years, and is currently an M-6 (temporary).

BRANTLEY stated that none of his findings, recommendations, or conclusions in any of his investigations or projects have been suppressed, "watered down," or changed by NSRS management so that the meaning of the report was "softened."

BRANTLEY stated that in January or February 1984, when Kermit WHITT took over as Director of NSRS, WHITT told the whole NSRS staff that their reports were too long. BRANTLEY stated that WHITT told them that from now on the NSRS reports were going to be "short and sweet."

BRANTLEY stated that a good example of this was his "swedge lock" report. He stated that this report was very detailed at first and that WHITT had him shorten it significantly. He stated that even though the report was shortened, the findings, conclusions, and recommendations were not changed. He stated that he believes that the original draft of this report, and also the shortened version, could be found in a green notebook in his Knoxville office of NSRS. He stated that his secretary, Joyce HUFFSTETTLER, would know where this green notebook is.

BRANTLEY stated that he was involved in the investigating and writing of the NSRS report on the Thimble tube incident at Sequoyah, and that many of the findings in that report were critical of TVA. He stated that none of the findings that he had discovered were suppressed or changed in any way in that report. BRANTLEY did state that WHITT told him (BRANTLEY) that the

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then Regional Administrator of the NRC, James P. O'REILLY, "jumped on" WHITT at an airport about the "purple" words that were contained in the NSRS Thimble Tube report.

BRANTLEY stated that while Newt CULVER was the director of NSRS, he (BRANTLEY) and Richard SMITH did an investigation and report on the rad waste system at the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant. He stated that CULVER drafted the cover letter for this report because both SMITH and he (BRANTLEY) were out of the office, either on annual leave or on another project. He stated that neither he nor SMITH had a real problem with the cover letter. He stated that CULVER contacted them by telephone and went over the cover letter, and that CULVER did not really highlight the things in the cover letter that he (BRANTLEY) and SMITH would have, but there was no changing or cover-up of the findings in the report itself.

BRANTLEY commented on the NSRS report of the TVA firing of [redacted]. He stated that the report said one thing and the cover letter essentially said the opposite. He stated that the report said that the firing of [redacted] was improper, but that CULVER's cover letter essentially stated that the firing was justified. BRANTLEY stated that he talked to Mike HARRISON about this discrepancy between the cover letter and the report, and HARRISON denied having anything to do with the cover letter. BRANTLEY stated that HARRISON said that CULVER did that entire cover letter.

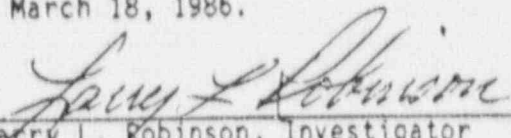
BRANTLEY stated that the very first review he did as an NSRS member was with Bob SAUER and Mr. BLANKNER on Water Chemistry. He stated that they spent about six to eight weeks in the field on this project, and that it developed into a lengthy report. BRANTLEY advised that CULVER wanted to delete two sections of the report pertaining to: (1) management controls, and (2) quality assurance. He stated that CULVER made the comment "we don't tell the line how to do business."

BRANTLEY stated that those two sections of the report were not included, but that one had to keep in mind that in the 1982 time frame, such prescriptive reporting would have been not well received by either CULVER, as Director of NSRS, or the addressees of the report.

BRANTLEY stated that, at HARRISON's direction, he was assigned to work with Mansour GUILTY on GUILTY's cable report. He stated that he was to help GUILTY summarize this report. He advised that they had a two day deadline to come up with the summary. He stated that he very soon realized that GUILTY was not going to be satisfied with a summary report, so he (BRANTLEY) stepped out of the picture. BRANTLEY stated that he knew that WHITT had a meeting with HARRISON, GUILTY and himself (BRANTLEY) at which time WHITT told GUILTY that he (WHITT) got two more weeks extension for the publishing of the report from Bill WILLIS. BRANTLEY stated that WHITT said he was losing sleep over the conflict regarding this particular report, and that he (WHITT) did not ever want to issue a report with which GUILTY was not happy.

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This Results of Interview was prepared on March 18, 1986.


Larry L. Robinson, Investigator

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW OF
GERALD G. BRANTLEY
AS PREPARED BY
INVESTIGATOR LARRY L. ROBINSON

On December 17, 1986, Gerald G. BRANTLEY, Employee Concern Program Site Representative, Watts Bar Nuclear Plant (WBN), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Spring City, Tennessee, was interviewed in his WBN Office by NRC Investigators Larry L. Robinson and E. L. Williamson. The nature of the interview pertained to whether or not BRANTLEY had been the recipient of any harassment, intimidation, or attempts at suppressing nuclear safety information, from anyone in TVA, while BRANTLEY was working for TVA's Nuclear Safety Review Staff (NSRS). BRANTLEY provided the following information, in substance:

BRANTLEY advised that when he was working for NSRS in the Spring of 1984, he read an article in the newspaper that described an incident involving Thimble Tube ejection at TVA's Sequoyah Nuclear Plant (SQN). BRANTLEY advised that he didn't think too much about it at first, but then he heard on the radio that SQN had borrowed the Department of Energy (DOE) robot to assist in the cleanup of the Thimble Tube incident.

BRANTLEY stated that he told Dick SMITH, an NSRS Supervisor, about the incident and the use of the robot in the cleanup, and SMITH then told Newt CULVER, the Director of NSRS, about it. BRANTLEY advised that CULVER directed that he (BRANTLEY), and Mike WINGO investigate the incident. BRANTLEY stated that he was aware that site management at Sequoyah was doing its own investigation of the incident, and when BRANTLEY telephoned Larry NOBLES, the Superintendent of Operations and Engineering at SQN, to advise him (NOBLES) that he (BRANTLEY) was coming to do an NSRS investigation of the incident, NOBLES didn't want NSRS to come. BRANTLEY advised, however, that when he and WINGO arrived at Sequoyah, the site staff was cooperative. BRANTLEY stated that the SQN Plant Manager, Charles MASON, was not too pleased, at first, that BRANTLEY was going to do this investigation, and made the comment that he, "thought I (BRANTLEY) was his friend." MASON requested that BRANTLEY not interview the supervisory personnel involved in the incident as the first phase of his (BRANTLEY's) investigation. BRANTLEY advised that that suited his plan perfectly because he first wanted to interview the lower level personnel involved, anyway.

BRANTLEY stated that, in order to familiarize himself with the equipment associated with the incident at Sequoyah, on Wednesday and Thursday of the first week of his

investigation he inspected the Seal Tables at the Watts Bar Nuclear Plant with Mike HARDING. BRANTLEY advised that he then went on to Sequoyah and started doing interviews of the personnel that were involved in the incident, and also started collecting pertinent documentation regarding the incident. He advised that he did this through Saturday of the first week.

BRANTLEY stated that, from the first series of interviews he did, he could see that "the situation looked like it was getting deep", and he decided that he was going to tape record the interviews. He advised that, on Saturday, he asked WINGO to take some photographs of the Seal Table Room, and when they asked Larry NOBLES for an escort, NOBLES told them that he didn't have anyone there that could escort WINGO. BRANTLEY advised that, on his own, he was easily able to obtain a Health Physics Tech to escort WINGO into the Seal Table room.

BRANTLEY advised that he recalled that he finished the field work portion of the investigation by Thursday of the next week. He advised that he prepared a 12 to 16 page exit report, and presented the findings to MASON, NOBLES, and HARDING on Friday morning. He advised that MASON read the whole exit report, and was obviously not happy with the findings, but told BRANTLEY that he knew that he (BRANTLEY) had to go back to Knoxville and "do what you have to do."

BRANTLEY advised that he was dissatisfied with the way the Sequoyah Thimble Tube Event was described in TVA's Licensee Event Report (LER) to the NRC. He thought that the severity and significance of the event was diminished far too much in the wording of the LER. He stated that, in his final NSRS Report, he recommended that the LER be changed to show the danger associated with performing such an operation while at power.

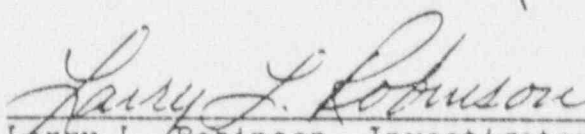
BRANTLEY advised that WINGO was extremely helpful during the conduct of the field work of the NSRS investigation of the incident, and that WINGO was involved in reviewing and commenting on the report during the report writing process. BRANTLEY advised that CULVER signed off on his (BRANTLEY's) final report and cover letter without making a single change.

BRANTLEY stated that after his final report was issued, KIDD came into his office on a Friday and told him that he (BRANTLEY) had to go with KIDD and CULVER to Sequoyah the next day (Saturday) for a briefing. BRANTLEY stated that when he and WINGO returned to Knoxville after the field work was completed, CULVER and Mike KIDD seemed to "cut WINGO out" of any briefings that took place regarding the investigation of the incident.

finding because it wasn't well documented. BRANTLEY advised that CULVER was very meticulous, and skeptical of his NSRS Staff members until they proved themselves to him, but after they proved that they could do the field work and write a good report, he (CULVER) was very supportive.

BRANTLEY advised that, after his experience with his Thimble Tube investigation and Report, he made sure that the appropriate TVA Line Management reviewed an advance copy of any NSRS Report he (BRANTLEY) wrote before it was published. He advised that the only reason he did this was to keep any disagreements between NSRS and the Line from being fought out in the newspapers, and that he did not dilute or change his findings or conclusions in anticipation of these Line reviews of his draft reports. BRANTLEY stated that KIDD had suggested that the draft reports be sent to the Line for comments on the facts, but not on the conclusions. BRANTLEY advised that CULVER had given him no direction one way or the other regarding these preliminary Line reviews of the draft reports. BRANTLEY stated that he didn't know for sure whether these preliminary reviews were official NSRS policy or not, but he made up his mind that he was going to have it done on reports that he wrote, or partially wrote, so that any disagreements would be hashed out before the report went public.

This Results of Interview was prepared on December 30, 1986.


Larry L. Robinson, Investigator

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW WITH JAMES C. JONES
ON JANUARY 14, 1986, AS PREPARED BY
INVESTIGATOR LARRY L. ROBINSON

On January 14, 1986, James C. JONES, Quality Assurance (QA) Evaluator, Division of Quality Assurance (DQA), Office of Nuclear Power, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), was interviewed in his office in Chattanooga, Tennessee. JONES provided the following information in substance:

JONES stated that he has been employed in his current position since November 1, 1984. He advised that from September 28, 1981, when he first became employed by TVA, until November 1, 1984, he was a Nuclear Engineer in the Nuclear Safety Review Staff (NSRS). JONES advised that his nuclear experience in quality assurance, audit, instrumentation, test equipment, controls, and welding goes back to 1975, when he was employed with Virginia Electric and Power Company from 1975 to April 1978 as a Quality Assurance Engineer at their North Anna Nuclear Power Station. JONES stated that he was employed with Johnson Controls Inc., from April 1978 to September 1978 as a Quality Engineer II, assisting the Director of QA in the preparation and editing of a QA manual. JONES advised that from September 1978 to October 1981, also with Johnson Controls, he was a QA Manager, responsible for the management of the Systems Engineering and Construction Division Quality Assurance Program at the Perry Ohio Nuclear Power Plant.

Prior to the interview, JONES stated that he had filed a harassment complaint against Mike KIDD, his former supervisor at NSRS, and that this harassment concern was currently being investigated by Quality Technology Company (QTC), a TVA contractor who is investigating employee concerns. JONES stated that all of the documentation pertaining to his harassment and intimidation complaint had been given to QTC.

JONES stated that prior to leaving NSRS, he had done a large procurement audit, part of which was involved in the harassment and intimidation issue being investigated by QTC, but that prior to leaving NSRS he had given KIDD a synopsis of what he was going to include as findings in his procurement report. JONES stated that he had spent a lot of time during that procurement audit at Watts Bar, but that the final version of the report contained no mention of any of his activity at Watts Bar.

JONES stated that after he had brought up the problems with the welding issues at Watts Bar, he had pretty much been "put in a box" at NSRS by his management.

JONES stated that the only other issue about which he was concerned while at NSRS was the manner in which the NSRS report on the firing of [redacted] went out.

JONES said that he would not sign the report unless it went out as it was, which meant that the report said [redacted] were improperly fired. JONES advised that TVA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) wanted to make some changes in the wording of the report to soften the findings and had come to KIDD to get this done. JONES stated that Mike HARRISON came to him

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(JONES) to get him to go along with the changes that were being made with the report. JONES stated that the report went out as they originally wanted it to, but the cover letter to that report stated almost the opposite of the findings in that report. JONES advised that the cover letter essentially said that TVA acted properly in their firing of

JONES stated, in referring back to his procurement audit, he found that power store Clerks, who were unqualified to inspect incoming equipment, were actually doing the signing off as having inspected qualified equipment being purchased by TVA. He said that these clerks merely checked the packing slips to determine if the items that were indicated on the packing slip had, in fact, been received. JONES further stated that any quality assurance items in the procurement report had been found by JONES himself, not by anyone else. JONES stated that he was not consulted at all about what went into the report.

JONES stated that he gave information to KIDD on some findings that he had found with respect to switchgear. JONES said that he thought the final report made the statement that NSRS did not have the time to finish the audit of switchgear procurement.

JONES stated that Frank LEWIS gave him (JONES) the purchase requests on the switchgear. JONES stated that the switchgear was laundered through the central purchasing office and then sent to the nuclear plants such as Sequoyah and Watts Bar.

JONES stated that a man named John MAYBEE, who was a supervisor for External Vendor Audits, had a meeting on switchgear with OGC of TVA. JONES said that MAYBEE told him that OGC said it was okay to purchase the switchgear in the method that they were doing it. JONES stated that was incorrect, that the switchgear had to be qualified for nuclear power plant usage.

JONES stated that the real "show stopper" as far as he was concerned was the case of the pressure transmitters at Sequoyah. JONES stated that he had a conversation with Vic WHALEN in Maintenance Engineering, and WHALEN told him that the pressure transmitters were procured at level 2, which meant that they could be bought from an unqualified vendor. He stated that WHALEN's logic was that the transmitters were purchased as "part of a whole." JONES stated that WHALEN advised that a pressure transmitter "was probably part of a panel," but JONES stated that WHALEN did not know the exact usage of those pressure transmitters.

JONES advised that KIDD questioned JONES' tactics regarding getting information from site people at Sequoyah on pressure transmitters. He stated that KIDD asked him if he was abrasive in getting the information from these people.

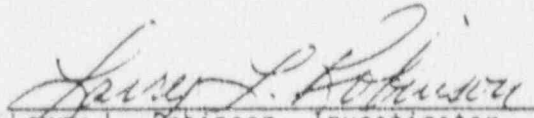
JONES stated that none of the items that he looked at that had been purchased by TVA central purchasing and had subsequently been delivered to nuclear sites were properly qualified. He stated that a good example of this was the switchgear at Browns Ferry Nuclear Power Plant. JONES stated that he thought the reason that all this procurement went through TVA

central office of procurement was that if it had been ordered directly by Sequoyah or Watts Bar, the equipment would have had to have been earmarked for nuclear usage up front.

JONES said that he did not keep copies of actual procurement documents regarding the switchgear and the pressure transmitter, but he did give them to KIDD. He stated that he had also given KIDD a chart on transmitters at Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant that indicated the Mechanical Engineering Report lists of procurement problems. He stated that he left these lists on a table in the office at NSRS. He stated that KIDD and he had talked about these lists because KIDD was accusing JONES of not having ever done anything at Browns Ferry.

JONES stated that the bulk of his concern regarding harassment and intimidation was, as he had indicated earlier, in the hands of QTC.

This Results of Interview was prepared on March 7, 1986.


Larry L. Robinson, Investigator

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL A. HARRISON
ON JUNE 5, 1985 AS PREPARED BY INVESTIGATOR
E. L. WILLIAMSON

On June 5, 1985, Michael A. HARRISON, Investigator for the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Nuclear Safety Review Staff (NSRS), was interviewed by NRC Investigators E. L. Williamson and Daniel D. Murphy concerning his knowledge of an NSRS investigation regarding alleged improper termination of personal service contract employees and his (HARRISON's) personal reluctance to express safety concerns to his management. HARRISON provided the following information in substance:

HARRISON stated that he has been employed by TVA for approximately four years having been hired to work in NSRS. He said from 1974-1981 he was employed by Virginia Electric and Power Company (VEPCO) at its North Anna Power Station (NAPS). He said he served as supervisor of the QA/QC Group while at NAPS and related that prior to his employment with VEPCO he was in the U.S. Navy.

HARRISON related that he had the "lead" on an investigation at Watts Bar Nuclear Plant in August-September 1982, wherein NSRS was asked to investigate the circumstances surrounding the termination of a contract employee and a TVA annual salary policy employee. He said the results of the investigation indicated that both of these individuals were released because of their complicity in improperly documenting an inspection activity, by rejecting hangers that had not been physically inspected. HARRISON acknowledged that during the conduct of this particular investigation, several factors did not fall into place as they should have. He said the conclusions reached were not easily justified. He said he identified a problem, wherein there was a general lack of QC independence without undue pressure from construction and scheduling requirements. He said he felt the contract employee was legally terminated by TVA because they had the right to terminate contract people at anytime. He added that the TVA employee was "caught-up" in the incident and was terminated, rehired, promoted and subsequently quit.

HARRISON said he received conflicting testimony from site managers and supervisors, with some saying the two employees were terminated for falsification of QA records, others saying they were fired for rejecting a series of hangers without detail inspection. He said most statements related that QC rejection was based on rejection of five of twenty-five hangers inspected, and the craft informing the inspector that the hangers were all hung in the same configuration.

HARRISON said his "gut feeling" was that the contract employee was terminated because his inspections were "too good," and that he made people, craft and QC supervision, angry because he wrote too many Inspection Rejection Notices (IRN's). He said he could not prove it, but this incident appeared to be an opportune time to get rid of someone who was being a "problem to supervision." He said he believed the TVA employee, who was in an OJT status, was probably fired to be consistent with the firing of the contract employee. HARRISON said he talked to Newt CULVER, Director of Nuclear Safety Review Staff, about his "gut

feelings" and he explained to CULVER that he could not support his personal feelings that the contract employee was terminated because his "too good" inspections and many IRN's angered the craft and QA supervision. HARRISON said CULVER was sympathetic, but told him he needed facts and evidence to support such contentions. He said he felt that without directly saying so, the point was made to the site, by a thorough investigation and strongly worded cover letter. HARRISON stated that CULVER said that the results of the investigation were positive, because it resulted in the site QA Manager being placed on the same line organization as the construction and site manager. He said all QA/QC people were now reporting to the QA Manager.

With regard to reluctance of reporting problems to supervision and management, HARRISON said he has never had any reservations about going to his supervisor, or higher, to discuss any problem regarding an investigation. He said he has never been pressured to change any reports, or do anything against his will. He said "he calls them the way he sees them," and added that he was not overly concerned with the TVA as an organization as to whether they agreed with him or not. He said he had a job to do and was going to do it as effectively as he could. He said that his management was generally supportive, regardless of information in the report, no matter how damaging the information might be to TVA. He said CULVER wanted facts to support the conclusions; and, if the facts were not available, then conclusions could not be drawn in those areas. HARRISON said he felt that he had done a thorough job on his investigation of the incident and continued to feel free in conducting objective investigations for NSRS. HARRISON did not provide any additional information pertinent to this investigation.

This Results of Interview was prepared on June 25, 1985.

E. L. Williamson
E. L. Williamson, Investigator

RESULTS OF INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM E. MASON
ON MAY 13, 1986 AS PREPARED BY INVESTIGATOR
LARRY L. ROBINSON

On May 13, 1986, William E. MASON, Assistant General Counsel, Office of General Counsel (OGC), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), was interviewed in his office by NRC Investigators Larry L. Robinson and Jack Kindt. The nature of the interview was pertaining to the interface between OGC and the Nuclear Safety Review Staff (NSRS), regarding the termination of contract employee () and TVA employee ().

MASON stated that he recalled having conversations with Newt CULVER, the Director of NSRS, regarding (). MASON advised that () had filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) regarding his termination. MASON stated that TVA OGC normally got involved when a TVA employee or contract employee filed a formal complaint with DOL. MASON stated that () as a TVA employee, had filed a grievance under the appropriate procedures internal to TVA, and that OGC had not been involved in that grievance procedure. MASON stated that, therefore, his recollection of his interface with CULVER regarding the termination of these inspectors centered mainly around () DOL complaint.


MASON provided copies of appropriate documentation from OGC's file on (). MASON stated that it was obvious from this documentation that OGC had requested an independent investigation by NSRS regarding any safety issues that pertained to the termination of ().

MASON stated that he recalled that one of his objectives in meeting with CULVER was to ensure that there was a unified TVA position taken regarding the termination of (). He stated that he recalled that he persuaded CULVER and another NSRS representative who he could not positively recall, that TVA indeed had the justification and prerogative to terminate () as () was a "job-shopper."

MASON advised that it was apparently obvious, from reviewing the documentation in OGC's file on () that the quality assurance issues that were identified in the NSRS report of investigation on () were followed up by the TVA Board of Directors, regardless of whether or not the cover letter, or transmittal letter, that transmitted this report highlighted the QA issues that were in the details of the report itself.

MASON stated that he did not see any disparity or conflict of meaning between the cover letter and the NSRS report itself.

This Results of Interview was prepared on May 19, 1986.


Larry L. Robinson, Investigator

Information in this record was deleted
in accordance with the Freedom of Information
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