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FEB 02 1991

Docket No. 50-271

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
ATTN: Mr. Warren P. Murphy
Senior Vice President, Operations
RD 5, Box 169
Ferry Road
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

Gentlemen:

Subject: NRC Inspection 50-271/90-09

This refers to your letter dated January 10, 1991, in response to our letter dated December 11, 1990.

Thank you for informing us of the corrective and preventive actions documented in your letter. These actions will be examined during a future inspection of your licensed program.

We appreciate your cooperation in these matters.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Charles W. Hehl, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

cc:

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Local Public Document Room (LPDR) (w/cy of Licensee's Response)
Nuclear Safety Information Center (NSIC) (w/cy of Licensee's Response)
NRC Resident Inspector (w/cy of Licensee's Response)
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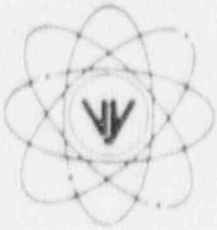
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January 10, 1991

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Washington, D.C. 20555

Attn: Document Control Desk

References:

- a) License No. DPR-28 (Docket No. 50-271)
- b) Letter, USNRC to VY C, Inspection Report 50-271/90-09, dated 9/28/90
- c) Letter, VYNPC to USNRC, BVY 90-104, dated 10/29/90
- d) Letter, USNRC to VYNPC, NVY 90-219, dated 12/11/90

Dear Sir:

Subject: **Revised Response to Inspection Report 50-271/90-09**

This letter is written in response to Reference d), which requested a revised response to Reference b), incorporating the views discussed at the November 19, 1990 meeting and the subject matter of Reference d).

Reference b) indicated that certain of our activities were not conducted in full compliance with NRC requirements. The alleged violation, classified at Severity Level IV, was identified as a result of an inspection conducted by the NRC Senior Resident Inspector during the period July 3-August 12, 1990. Our revised response to this violation is provided below.

VIOLATION

10CFR50.59(a) states that changes in the facility as described in the Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR) may be made without prior Commission approval if the proposed change does not involve an unreviewed safety question. 10CFR50.59(b) requires a written safety evaluation which provides the basis for the determination that the change does not involve an unreviewed safety question. Additionally, Technical Specification 6.2.6.d states, in part, that the Plant Operations Review Committee (PORC) shall review proposed changes to plant systems which would require a change in normal plant operating procedures.

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Contrary to the above, Vermont Yankee Procedure AP 0155, Revision 13, Current System Valve and Breaker Lineup and Identification, allows changes to the facility to occur prior to the preparation and PORC reviews of written safety evaluations following the implementation of a valve lineup deviation from that specified in normal operating procedures. As a result:

1. On April 8, 1989, Core Spray Valve CS-11B was placed in the closed position and the required safety evaluation was not prepared and reviewed by PORC until February 21, 1990. FSAR Section 6.4.3 describes that this valve is normally open to limit the equipment needed to operate in an accident condition; and
2. On April 2, 1990, High Pressure Core Injection Valve HPCI-19 was opened and HPCI-20 was closed and the required safety evaluation was not prepared until April 25 and reviewed by PORC until April 27. FSAR Figure 7.4-1a describes HPCI-19 as normally closed and HPCI-20 as normally open.

The two examples collectively demonstrate an unacceptable practice of making facility changes as described in the FSAR prior to preparing a written safety evaluation that the change does not constitute an unreviewed safety question.

RESPONSE

Vermont Yankee agrees that if a 10CFR50.59 evaluation is required to support a change in the facility, then the safety evaluation must be completed and approved prior to the change being implemented. Contrary to this, as discussed above, our procedure AP 0155 currently allows a 10CFR50.59 evaluation to be performed following implementation of a valve lineup deviation from normal operating procedures.

Based on the views discussed at the November 19, 1990 meeting and the subject matter of Reference d), we will revise AP 0155 as follows:

1. To require that, if it is determined that a 10CFR50.59 evaluation is applicable, the evaluation will be performed prior to implementation of the change.
2. To provide the necessary guidance for determining when a 10CFR50.59 evaluation is required.

Further, all licensed operators will receive training in the intent and conduct of 10CFR50.59 evaluations.

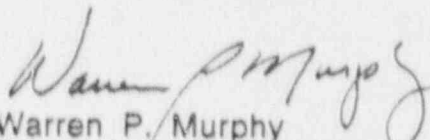
The procedure revision will be implemented by March 1, 1991, and operator training will be completed by the end of the first cycle of the 1991 Licensed Operator Requal period.

We continue to strongly believe that the need exists, in the interest of plant safety, for a standardized and consistent approach or program for evaluation of off-normal conditions. When NRC guidance is promulgated regarding operability determinations, we will re-evaluate our proposed program described in Reference c) and discussed at the November 19, 1990 meeting against the NRC guidance and make the appropriate revisions prior to implementation.

We trust the above information adequately addresses your concerns; however, should you have any questions or desire additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation



Warren P. Murphy
Senior Vice President, Operations

/dm

cc: USNRC Regional Administrator, Region I
USNRC Resident Inspector, VYNPS
USNRC Project Manager, VYNPS