



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

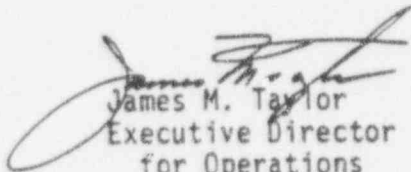
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman Carr  
Commissioner Roberts  
Commissioner Rogers  
Commissioner Curtiss ✓  
Commissioner Remick

FROM: James M. Taylor  
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: CRITERIA FOR THE REMOVAL OF PLANTS FROM THE NRC PROBLEM  
PLANT LIST

Enclosed for your information are criteria the staff will be using in determining if plants should be removed from the problem plant list.

  
James M. Taylor  
Executive Director  
for Operations

cc: SECY  
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## CRITERIA FOR THE REMOVAL OF PLANTS FROM THE NRC PROBLEM PLANT WATCH LIST

This paper proposes the framework for the removal of plants from the NRC problem plant list. The guidelines are intended to be general, because the reasons for placing a plant on the NRC problem plant list vary widely. A plant may be of concern due to hardware and technical issues, operational problems, or licensee management weaknesses.

Following the June 1985 loss of feedwater event at Davis-Besse, senior NRC managers decided to meet periodically to discuss the plants of most concern to the agency and to plan a coordinated course of action. The first Senior Management Meeting (SMM) was held in April 1986, and subsequent semiannual meetings have been conducted.

During the evaluation process to determine which plants are of most concern, each plant in each region is discussed to assess the licensee's operational safety performance, hardware issues, significant design information, and risk perspective from a PRA standpoint. The NRC managers also use summaries of the most recent SALP, SALP history, current operating experience, current NRC and licensee activities, and performance indicator data.

In reviewing the plants that have experienced significant performance problems, the senior NRC managers have established three levels or categories of performance based upon plant actions to correct the problems and to achieve improved operations. Other than the definitions listed below, there are currently no specific criteria for placing plants on the problem plant list. The current categories are defined as:

1. Plants removed from the list of problem facilities

Plants in this category have taken effective action to correct identified problems and to implement programs for improved performance. No further NRC special attention is necessary beyond the regional office's current level of monitoring to ensure improvement continues.

2. Plants authorized to operate that the NRC will monitor closely

Plants in this category are having or have had weaknesses that warrant increased NRC attention from both headquarters and the regional office. A plant will remain in this category until a licensee demonstrates a period of improved performance.

3. Shutdown plants requiring NRC authorization to operate and which the NRC will monitor closely

Plants in this category are having or have had significant weaknesses that warrant maintaining the plant in a shutdown condition until the licensee can demonstrate to the NRC that adequate programs have both been established and implemented to ensure substantial improvement.

Fourteen plants (10 sites) have been removed from the problem plant list since 1986. The meeting results from the previous SMM's were reviewed to determine what reasons were given for removal of these plants from the list. The bases for removal of these plants has varied because of the different reasons for being placed on the list. A compilation of these bases was sent to each region for comment, in order to develop the proposed guidelines for removal of plants from the list.

On November 23, 1988, staff guidelines concerning restart approval were issued by the EDO. These guidelines provide general criteria on the issues to be considered during the staff's evaluation of plant restart approval. In other words, these guidelines cover the plants moving from a Category 3 to a Category 2. The enclosed criteria will cover the plants moving from Category 2 to Category 1. There was an effort to ensure that the applicable restart criteria were enveloped into these guidelines, since a plant which is originally placed in Category 3 must meet each set of guidelines prior to removal from the problem plant list.

The proposed guidelines have been organized into four general areas: (1) root cause identified and corrected, (2) improved self-assessment and problem resolution, (3) licensee management organization and oversight, and (4) NRC assessment complete.

The general criteria for removal of plants from the NRC problem plant list are as follows:

1. Root Cause Identified and Corrected

- a. The licensee has thoroughly assessed weak performance areas and developed a comprehensive and clearly defined program to correct the root cause(s). The corrective action program includes a schedule for implementation and a verification program.
- b. The NRC is satisfied, through demonstrated and sustained successful plant performance, that the licensee's corrective action program is sufficiently implemented such that performance has sufficiently improved to justify returning the plant to normal NRC oversight. The licensee's corrective actions include sufficient measures to prevent recurrence of problems.
- c. For those long-term corrective measures that remain to be completed, the NRC has reviewed the licensee's schedule for completion, found the schedule acceptable, and the licensee is generally adhering to the schedule. The licensee management has allocated sufficient resources to carry out long-range corrective action programs, assuring continued satisfactory progress.

2. Improved Self-Assessment and Problem Resolution

- a. The licensee has demonstrated an improved approach to self-identification and resolution of safety problems, and has instituted program elements which monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of corrective actions. The requisite internal communications and coordination are established to assure that safety issues are being identified to the appropriate level of management and corrected in a timely manner.
- b. The licensee's quality assurance and safety oversight groups are demonstrating improved capabilities in providing timely and effective self-assessments of performance to site and corporate management.

3. Licensee Management Organization and Oversight

- a. The licensee's corporate and plant management team is stable and competent, has accepted and implemented the corrective actions, and is fully committed to achieving improved performance. There is reasonable assurance that the management team will remain in place for a period of time commensurate with the long-range corrective action plan.
- b. The licensee has effective corporate management oversight and involvement in plant operations and problem resolution. The management team provides strong direction and is fostering a nuclear safety work ethic which is understood at all levels in the organization.

4. NRC Assessment Complete

- a. The NRC senior management has assessed licensee performance and improvement programs such that it no longer considers the plant as having weaknesses that warrant increased NRC-wide attention.
- b. Significant NRC inspection and licensing activities are complete and findings are properly resolved or understood to support removal from the watch list.