

## NUCLEAR REACTOR LABORATORY

AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL CENTER OF  
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY



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J.A. BERNARD, JR.  
Director of Reactor Operations

March 14, 1991

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission,  
Washington, D.C. 20555

ATTN: Document Control Desk

Subject: Response to NRC Inspection Report Nos. 50-20/91-01 and 70-938/91-01

Gentlemen:

This letter refers to the Notice of Violation for NRC Inspection Report Nos. 50-20/91-01 and 70-938/91-01. That notice requires a response within 30 days of the date of the letter transmitting the notice. The transmittal letter is dated 1 March 1991. Hence a reply is required by 03/31/91. However, we only received the report on 03/12/91 and, as a result, will not be able to respond by the allowed date. Please be advised that, because of the late receipt of the notice, we will respond by 12 April 1991.

As regards the report, it was reviewed jointly upon receipt by Dr. Bernard, Mr. Masse, and Professor Harling. A list of the items noted in the report has been made and we are preparing a schedule for rectifying each item. Two immediate concerns were noted during our initial review of the report. These are as follows:

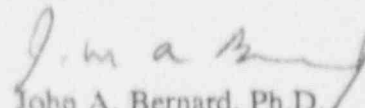
1. We request that all of line 4 and the first two words of line 5 in the first paragraph of section 4.2 of the report be deleted. Please contact us if this request cannot be accommodated.
2. We also note that the first item of violation may be worded too broadly. Specifically, quarterly inspections of radiation safety activities are performed at the reactor in accordance with a written procedure and are reported to the MIT Reactor Safeguards Committee. This is done either as part of the quarterly administrative audits performed by the Director of Reactor Operations or as a separate audit performed by a licensed Senior Reactor Operator. Also, verbal reports are made by the MIT Radiation Protection Officer to the MIT Reactor Safeguards Committee on other activities conducted under this license. These are documented in the Committee Minutes. As presently worded, the violation implies that none of the required activity was done. This is not the case. Accordingly, we question whether this item should be classed as a Severity Level IV Violation. Our original impression was that it would be an Inspector Followup Item. Please note that we

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do recognize the need for improvement in this area but do not feel the deficiency to be as substantial as implied by the present wording of the violation.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on the inspection report and will provide the requested response as soon as possible but not later than April 12, 1991.

Sincerely,

  
John A. Bernard, Ph.D.  
Director of Reactor Operations  
MIT Research Reactor

JAB/gw

- cc: USNRC - Region I - Chief,  
Reactor Projects Section No. 3A
- USNRC - Region I - Reactor Engineer,  
Reactor Projects Section No. 3A
- USNRC - Senior Resident Inspector,  
Pilgrim Nuclear Station
- USNRC - Project Manager,  
Standardization and Non-Power Project Directorate
- USNRC - Region I - Chief,  
Effluents Radiation Protection Section
- USNRC - Region I - Chief,  
Facilities Radiological Safety and Safeguards Branch
- USNRC - Region I - Regional Administrator