

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-83-15

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region I staff on this date.

Facility: Philadelphia Electric Company  
Peach Bottom, Unit 3  
(DN 50-278)  
Delta, Pennsylvania

Licensee Emergency Classification:  
\_\_\_\_ Notification of Unusual Event  
\_\_\_\_ Alert  
\_\_\_\_ Site Area Emergency  
\_\_\_\_ General Emergency  
  X   Not Applicable

Subject: UNPLANNED RADIOACTIVE LIQUID RELEASE DUE TO INADVERTENT RHR ACTUATION

At about 7:00 p.m., March 3, 1983 with the unit in process of refueling, a false low reactor water level signal was generated by technicians calibrating reactor water level instrumentation. The signal was of sufficient duration (~3 seconds) to cause the start of two residual heat removal (RHR) pumps (~10,000 gpm each, rated flow) and the unit's emergency diesel generators (4). The RHR pumps injected about 60,000 gallons of water from the torus to the open reactor vessel in the three minutes it took the operators to assess the situation and stop the RHR pumps. The injection resulted in overflowing the already filled reactor cavity into the cavity ventilation system and onto the refueling floor from where the water cascaded to lower levels in the reactor building.

About 50 gallons of water having activity of ~1.7 E-3 uCi/ml (~350 microcuries of radioactivity) flowed beneath a truck bay door in the reactor building and into the plant storm drain. Sampling of the storm drain catch basins indicated that the radioactivity was diluted to below detectable concentrations prior to entering the Susquehanna River.

Extensive decontamination will be required to restore normal access to the reactor building. No safety-related equipment damage, with the exception of some wetted cables, has been reported; however, equipment testing is still in progress. Reactor cavity ventilation duct work has been noted to be ruptured in several places (from the weight of the water which flowed through it) and one non-safety-related cable tray also sustained some damage. No personnel contamination occurred and the licensee has taken precautions and is closely monitoring for airborne radioactivity as contaminated surfaces dry. The Stand-By Gas Treatment System is in operation.

The NRC Incident Response Center was notified of the event at about 8:30 p.m. and the resident inspector, dispatched to the site by Region I, assessed licensee data and clean-up efforts between about 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. (March 4). Resident inspector follow-up will continue. This information is current as of 9:00 a.m., March 4, 1983.

The licensee has issued a press release. NRC Region I does not plan a press release but has responded to media inquiries. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the State of Maryland have been informed.

CONTACT: R. Architzel  
(488-1231)

R. R. Keimig  
(488-1224)

DISTRUBUTION:

H. St. _____	MNBB _____	Phillips <u>1150</u>	E/W _____	Willste _____	Mail: ADM:DMB
Chairman Palladino	EDO _____	NRR _____	IE _____	NMSS _____	DOT:
Trans. Only					
Comm. Gilinsky	PA _____		OIA _____	RES _____	
Comm. Ahearne	MPA _____		AEOD _____		
Comm. Roberts	ELD _____				
Comm. Asselstine					
ACRS		Air Rights _____	INPO _____		
SECY		SP _____	NSAC _____		
CA					
PDR	Regional Offices _____			TMI Resident Section <u>3 200</u>	
				RI Resident Office <u>Perkins 1155</u>	
				Licensee: _____	