



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION III
799 ROOSEVELT ROAD
GLEN ELLYN, ILLINOIS 60137

July 23, 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: R. F. Warnick, Director, Enforcement and Investigations Staff

FROM: R. J. Cook, Senior Resident Inspector, Midland Site

SUBJECT: INDICATORS OF QUESTIONABLE LICENSEE PERFORMANCE - MIDLAND SITE

As per our conversation of July 21, 1982, the following is a list of those items that various inspectors consider to be indicative of questionable licensee performance:

1. One of the leading items is the over-inspection performed on electrical QC inspectors which was done in response to NRC concerns identified in the May 1981 team inspection. The licensee found weaknesses in the inspections performed by some electrical QC inspectors pertaining to not identifying the mis-routing of cables. This item culminated in an item of noncompliance. The licensee did not expand the overview activity to a degree necessary for an acceptable resolution to the identified weakness - even after a meeting in RIII. This item has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the NRC although our position has been clearly defined.

As a partial response to the team inspection concern, the licensee presented the NRC with an audit report which would demonstrate a response to our concern of questionable electrical QC inspections. However, the audit report stated that it (the audit report) did not address the NRC concerns.

2. During the dialogue for the underpinning and remedial soils work, a large amount of emphasis has been placed on the settling data for the structures involved. During a meeting in HQ on March 10, 1982, the need for QC requirements on remedial soils instrumentation were explicitly delineated. However, one week later, the NRC inspectors found soils work instrumentation installation was started the day after the March 10, 1982 meeting without a QC/QA umbrella; that the licensee's QA Auditor and QA Engineering personnel were not approached pertaining to the need for QA coverage for this soils settlement instrumentation; that there were strong indications that the licensee had misled the NRC in relating that the work was essentially complete when indeed it was not; and presently, the licensee management informs our inspector that items are ready for his review when in actuality they are not. Our conversations with licensee personnel - other than management - confirm that the items are not ready for review.

3. Historically, one of the NRC questions has been, "Who is running the job - Bechtel or Consumers?" The following example would allow one to believe it is Bechtel: As a part of the resolution to our findings in the soils settlement instrumentation installation, the NRC insisted that the licensee generate a Coordination/Installation Form to cover interface between different evolutions of instrumentation installation. The licensee would call our inspector for his concurrence on the adequacy of the form - the inspector would approve Consumers Power Company's form, but then would find out that Bechtel did not want to work to Consumer's form - the form that was generated to resolve regulatory concerns. This event has occurred twice and was considered as a deviation during a more recent inspection. The opinion of the staff is that if Consumers generates a form that will aid them in not incurring regulatory difficulty, and which has had NRC input, the licensee should demand that the contractor comply with these policies instead of the contractor dictating the regulatory environment under which they will work.
4. Deficiencies in material storage conditions has continually been a concern to the NRC and has resulted in items of noncompliance. To the inspectors, the ability to maintain quality storage is indicative of how rigorous or slipshod the constructor's attitude is towards construction. The licensee has attempted to entice the constructor to do better in maintaining the material storage conditions, but still the licensee's auditors and the NRC have negative findings in material storage conditions and negative discussions with the contractor about the validity of the finding.
5. At periodic intervals, the support of cables, particularly in the control room area, which are awaiting further routing or termination, has met with the disapproval of the NRC inspectors. These discrepancies also include cables without covered ends being on the floor in walk areas that are in a partially installed status. This is also another indicator of slipshod workmanship which has been brought to the constructor's attention at various times, but was last noted during a recent inspection.
6. In the area of instrumentation impulse line installation and marking, the licensee has had separability violations which has required removal of all installed impulse lines. Also, the NRC, because of this and significant adverse operational conditions, insisted that the installed impulse lines be identified. Although the licensee plans to mark the impulse lines, there was an inordinate amount of resistance to marking the lines - even though there had been instances of mis-matched channels because of identification confusion.

7. An example of reluctance in placing the responsibility for quality workmanship at the foreman and/or worker level has recently been identified. The NRC inspectors noted that some drop-in anchors were improperly installed and obviously did not adhere to the installation procedures. The licensee's attitude indicated this was not a valid finding because QC had not inspected the item. The NRC inspectors treat this as indicative that slipshod workmanship is tolerated in the hopes that QC will find the mistakes.
8. Late in 1981, the licensee decided to move the QA Site Superintendent into another position and cover this site function by sharing the site time between the QA Director and the QA Manager. After a January 1982 meeting with the NRC at RIII, the licensee opted to fill the QA Superintendent spot with another person. In the spring of the year, the NRC inspectors were following up on welding allegations and approached the QA Superintendent. The QA Superintendent was familiar with the alleged poor welding and had established what the NRC inspectors determined to be a responsive plan to resolve the questionable QC welding inspections. At the Exit Interview, the QA Director did not appear to back the QA Site Superintendent's proposed plan which had tacit NRC approval. The NRC inspector classified in writing and with just cause that the Exit Interview was the most hostile exit interview he had ever encountered.
9. During a recent inspection, it was noted by the NRC inspector that fill dirt was piled and being covered with a mud mat at a nominal 1:1 $\frac{1}{2}$ horizontal to vertical slope when the specification called for a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$:1 horizontal to vertical slope. A constructor Field Engineer witnessed the wrong slope being installed and justified and defended the slope after being informed of the specification requirement. This is another example of the constructor having an attitude which precludes quality workmanship.
10. At different times, NRC inspectors have experienced difficulty in getting information which is controlled by the contractor, such as supporting calculations and qualifying information to justify a given installation. A recent example is: the NRC inspector informed the licensee and the contractor he wanted to see resumes of persons involved in the remedial soils work. There is an obligation to the NRC to supply a precise number of "qualified" persons on the soils work. The inspector was informed he could not get these records as they were personal. The inspector ultimately did get the information after bringing it to the attention of licensee upper management. However, this indicates an implied unwillingness of the constructor to share information with the NRC and sometimes with the licensee.

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11. The licensee oftentimes does not demonstrate a "heads up" approach to their activities. The following are examples of the licensee operating in an environment using tunnel vision - "blindness".
- a) During a recent NRC inspection, the inspector challenged the ability to maintain the proper mix ratio on high pressure grout. This was done after the inspector noted that the operator could never maintain the proper mix ratio without continual manual control - which was not available when the grout is applied. The licensee's apathetic attitude did not allow them to stop the grout application until the next day when this became an issue at the exit interview.
- b) At one point in time, the company doing drilling on site for the remedial soils work cut into a safety related duct bank between the diesel generator building and the service water building. The Consumers Power Site Manager's Office (the production people) stopped work because - from a quality standpoint conditions were so deplorable. However, the Site Manager's Office did not have responsibility in this area - the Midland Project QA Department had this responsibility and did not invoke their authority to prevent the drilling work from getting out of control - or to bring it back into control.
- c) The NRC inspector recently witnessed the licensee setting up to drill a well hole in safety related dirt using a technique which was not authorized. If the inspector had not brought this to the licensee's attention, the licensee would have violated an Order addressing remedial soils work and also the Construction Permit. When the licensee was queried as to the availability of the QC/QA personnel who would prevent such activity from happening, the NRC inspector was informed that this was (another) misunderstanding.

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The NRC inspectors have been informed by our contacts on site that there are memoes written to the effect that "peripheral vision" should be curtailed and communication with the NRC stifled. The NRC has not read these memoes yet - but plans to in the near future, provided they really exist and infer what we have been informed.

12. The licensee seems to possess the unique ability to search all factions of the NRC until they have found one that is sympathetic to their point of view - irregardless of the impact on plant integrity. Some examples of this are:
- a) The NRC soils inspector informs the licensee that soils stabilization grout comes under the Q program. The licensee is not particularly happy with this position. Unknown to the inspector, the licensee argues his point with NRR to have the grout non-Q - using only those arguments which support his (the licensee's) position. The licensee

has the advantage of the NRC inspector's technical and regulatory basis for supporting his (the inspector's) position, and therefore avoids mention of this during the discussions with NRR. However, the licensee's QA program, which has already been approved by NRR, states that all the remedial soils work is Q unless RIII approves a relaxation on a case by case basis. It appears the licensee does not wish to acknowledge the prior agreements with the NRC.

- b) Since the failure of auxiliary feedwater headers in B&W steam generators, discussions have transpired between the NRC inspectors and the site personnel. These discussions have indicated that the licensee was maintaining a conservative approach and were entertaining the concerns expressed by the NRC which were stimulated primarily by gross mistakes in attempting the modification at operating B&W plants. The licensee's corporate personnel were annoyed that the NRC inspectors would not give approval to start the modification until all the preparatory work had been accomplished as this would tend to impact the schedule and the modification to the steam generators could become a scheduling nuisance. The licensee corporate personnel contacted the NRC inspectors involved to "reason with them". However, the corporate personnel, (including a representative from B&W) were unable to answer the concerns of the NRC inspectors but did mention that the NRR Operational Project Manager indicated that it was alright to proceed with the modification. The licensee corporate personnel could not state what the position of the NRR Construction Project Manager was on this issue - only that they had found some form of approval from someone in the NRC.
- c) At times, when Immediate Action Letters or other forms of escalated enforcement become imminent, the licensee attempts to "appeal" their case with individuals in the regional management who are removed from the particulars of the tentative enforcement action. The licensee attempts to get these persons to agree to specific portions of the issue which would indicate that the licensee is "really not all that bad". However, the "real" issues, as identified by the NRC inspectors are being masked.
- d) During inspections of the remedial soils work, the NRC inspector has been informed by the licensee that certain findings and areas of inspection were not within the purview of his (the inspector's) inspection program because they were in essence considered non-Q and that by virtue of prior agreement with the Regional Administrator were excluded from enforcement action. However, the NRC inspectors would subsequently find that there was no such agreement between the Regional Administrator and the licensee - only a philosophical discussion as to what, in general terms, constituted an item of noncompliance.

The above indicators support the reputation the licensee has for being argumentative. Their apparent inability to accept an NRC position without diligently searching to find a "softened" position results in numerous hours of frustrated conversations between all parties involved to resubstantiate (usually the original position) a position based on technical and regulatory prudence.

13. The licensee has been classified publicly by the NRC as being argumentative. The licensee continues to exhibit this trend, as evidenced by the following examples:
 - a) Essentially every item of noncompliance receives an argumentative answer which addresses only the specificity of the item of noncompliance and selectively avoids any concept which would support the essence for the item of noncompliance. For example - in the instance of the improperly installed drop-in anchor mentioned above, it was the fact that QC had not inspected the installation of the bolt which was important to the licensee. However, the real enforcement issue was that components were being improperly installed.
 - b) The Cycle II SALP made critical evaluations of the licensee's performance in several areas. The licensee's response to this SALP report was argumentative over specific details and did not seem to acknowledge that the consensus of opinion of the NRC inspection staff was that there were areas where the licensee's performance was weak. The licensee's argumentative position is in the form of "we really are not all that bad" when the records, findings and observations of the NRC inspectors support just the opposite position.
 - c) The "Q-ness" of the remedial soils work has continually been an argumentative topic of discussion which ultimately resulted in a HQ meeting on March 10, 1982. At this meeting, the "Q-ness" of the remedial soils work was specified and later documented with the meeting minutes. However, the licensee did not wish to abide by this position and a subsequent meeting was held in RIII to further clarify the NRC position. Still, the topic of "Q-ness" is being argued by the licensee, even though the ASLE has issued an Order further defining the "Q-ness" of the soils work. It might be noted that a hearing is in process over this soils issue and the NRC's position on "Q-ness" has been expressed during these testimonies.
14. During a recent episode, the licensee wanted to continue excavation of soils in proximity to the Feedwater Isolation Valve Pit (FIVP). However, the licensee wanted to perform this evolution without determining that the temporary supports of the FIVP were adequate. Making this determination would have an impact on scheduling, as stated by the licensee. The FIVP supports were installed without a Q umbrella and subsequent inspections did reveal several discrepancies in the installation of the support structure.

15. During the limited remedial soils work which has transpired, the licensee has managed to penetrate Q-electrical duct banks, a condenser header drain line, an abandoned sewer line, a non-Q electrical duct bank and a 72-inch circulating water line. All of these occurrences have happened because of a lack of control and attention to details. Whenever approached by the NRC as to the adequacy of review prior to attempting to drill, the NRC receives responses which strongly suggest that the time was not taken to perform these reviews - perhaps taking this time would impact on the schedule.
16. By virtue of an earlier ALAB Order, the licensee is required to perform trend analyses for nonconforming conditions. These trend analyses have, in the past, masked the data such that obvious trends are not obvious and has resulted in negative findings by the NRC. This was addressed in one of the earlier SALP meetings. Recently, while performing a review of hanger welding data, the NRC inspector found that the statistical data had been diluted to the point that the number of unsatisfactory hangers could not be determined from the trend analyses or the type and degree of non-conforming conditions which were being identified pertinent to the hanger fabrication.
17. The licensee continually would use the NRC staff as consultants and classifies a regulatory and enforcement position as counter productive. This is reflected by the licensee not wishing to perform Q-work without obtaining NRC prior approval and then addressing only those areas where the NRC has voiced a regulatory concern - provided it is convenient to the licensee. This attitude has particularly prevailed in the remedial soils issue and to a lesser degree in the electrical installation areas. The preferred NRC inspector mode would be for the licensee to generate his program to establish quality and then the NRC would approve or disapprove. However, the licensee requires consultation with the NRC to establish his level of quality requirements.

The above is not intended to be a complete list of all discrepancies which indicate questionable licensee performance as this would require a more extensive review of the records and inspection personnel involved than time permits. Also, there has been no attempt to systematically document the enforcement and unresolved items list as these are contained in other information sources. However, the listing is rather comprehensive of the types of situations and attitudes which prevail at the Midland Site as observed by the NRC inspector staff.

When considering the above listing of questionable licensee performance attributes, the most damning concept is the fact that the NRC inspection effort at Midland has been purely reactive in nature for approximately the last year, and that these indicators are what have been observed in approximately the last six months. If

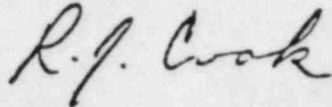
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these are the types of items that have become an NRC nuisance under a reactive inspection program, one can only wonder at what would be disclosed under a rigorous routine inspection and audit program.

Sincerely,



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