DCS No: 50272-830825
Date: August 25, 1983

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE- PNO-I-83-89

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: Public Service Electric & Gas Co.
Salem Unit 1
DN 50-272

Licensee Emergency Classification:
____Notification of Unusual Event
____Alert
____Site Area Emergency
____General Emergency
__X__ Not Applicable

Subject: SALEM UNIT 1 REACTOR TRIP BREAKER PROBLEM

At 10:55 a.m. on August 25 Salem Unit 1 achieved criticality after correcting problems associated with the reactor trip breakers (RTBs) following a reactor trip on August 22. The trip on August 22 was caused by a broken latch on the right rail of the "B" reactor trip breaker cubicle which permitted the breaker to become misaligned and actuate an electrical switch in the back of the cubicle associated with the P-4 interlock. Actuation of the P-4 circuit caused a turbine trip which in turn caused a reactor trip.

Further investigation revealed that three of the four RTB latches on Unit 1 were broken and the same latches on all Unit 2 RTB cubicles were bent. All latches and the associated right rails on Unit 1 RTB cubicles have been replaced with new assemblies. During RTB testing on August 23, 1983 in preparation for Unit 1 startup, the 'B' RTB failed to close when operated from the control room. The licensee and Westinghouse determined the cause of the failure to close, to be due to improper contact between a cell interlock assembly and the breaker trip bar, such that vibration from breaker operation would actuate the trip bar and trip the breaker during the closing sequence. The purpose of the cell interlock assembly is to trip the breaker when the breaker is being racked in or out. The 'B' RTB was replaced with the 'A' RTB from Unit 2, proper clearance between the cell interlock and the trip bar was verified on both RTBs and bypass breakers on Unit 1, and all breakers were successfully tested.

The resident inspectors and Regional management closely monitored the licensee's actions and Region I concurred with the breaker problem resolution and Unit startup.

The licensee in conjunction with Westinghouse is evaluating actions to prevent recurrence of the above problems. Prior to Unit 2 startup, new rail/latch assemblies and cell interlocks will be installed in Unit 2 RTBs. Additional steps will be added to surveillance and maintenance procedures to check the condition of the latch and cell interlocks. The PSE&G lab will conduct metallurgical examination of a failed latch and proper breaker rack in and out techniques will be examined.

The licensee has not issued a press release. NRC will respond to media inquiries. The State of New Jersey and Delaware have been informed.

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Licensee: _____
(Reactor Licensees)

Region I Form 83
(Rev. January, 1983)