

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-92-07B Date February 26, 1992

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 III staff on this date.

Facility: Prairie Island Unit 2  
Docket No. 50-306

Licensee Emergency Classification

General Emergency \_\_\_\_\_ Site Area Emergency \_\_\_\_\_  
Alert \_\_\_\_\_ Unusual Event X N/A \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: AIT TO REVIEW LOSS OF SHUTDOWN COOLING WHILE REACTOR WATER LEVEL BEING LOWERED - UPDATE

On February 25, 1992, the Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) completed its onsite review of the loss of shutdown cooling event which occurred February 20, 1992, at Unit 2 of the Prairie Island Nuclear Power Station.

The principal findings of the AIT were:

-- Electronic level measuring equipment was not functional and the visual measurement using a transparent plastic tube was inaccurate because of the pressure conditions in the reactor cooling system. About 3.5 pounds per square inch of pressure using nitrogen was being used to assist in the draining of the steam generator tubes. As a result reactor operators thought they knew the water level in the reactor, but in fact they did not know the correct level.

-- The procedure for lowering the water level in the primary system was deficient and did not include "hold points" to review the status of the primary system before continuing the draining.

-- Reactor operators questioned the accuracy of the electronic measuring equipment, but did not raise their questions with their supervisors. There was insufficient engineering support for the draining of the primary system.

-- Once the reactor operators realized that the reactor water level was lower than expected and that the Residual Heat Removal (RHR) System pump was cavitating, they performed well in responding to the event. The reactor water level was promptly restored, and the RHR system placed back in service.

-- Following recovery from the event, the licensee resumed the primary system draining activities. The AIT confirmed Regional management concerns that this decision was premature because some questions about the event were unanswered at that time. Following discussions with Region III on February 21, the licensee halted vessel draining activities pending further review by the licensee and the NRC.

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The AIT presented its preliminary findings to the licensee in a meeting February 25 at the plant site which was open to the public. News media, members of the public, and state and Indian tribe representatives attended.

The information in this updated Preliminary Notification is current as of 10 a.m., February 26, 1992.

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