

November 23, 1991

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-91-74A

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 II staff on this date.

FACILITY: Duke Power Company  
Oconee Nuclear Power Plant  
Unit 3  
Docket No. 50-287

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

SUBJECT: REACTOR COOLANT SYSTEM (RCS) LEAK: UPDATE

Unit 3 continues to remain stable with all ECCS equipment operable following the declaration of an Alert at 0214 on November 23, 1991, due to an approximate 70-90 gpm leak.

The licensee continued with a controlled RCS depressurization and cooldown to about 530 psig and 345 degrees F, at which time operators aligned the alternate vent path for the core flood tanks as part of the routine low temperature overpressure protection system requirements. The reactor remains shutdown with a cooldown in progress with the RCS pressure and temperature at 270 psig and 225 degrees F respectively. The current RCS leak rate is estimated at 10-15 gpm. The licensee initiated low pressure injection (for decay heat removal) at 1550. The licensee plans to remain in an Alert classification status until the reactor is in cold shutdown which is estimated to be reached at 1730.

There have been no abnormal offsite releases. Although the licensee is making preparations in the radwaste facility to receive RCS leakage from the containment sump, they do not plan on purging the containment nor making a personnel entry into the containment (to identify the source of the leak) until after a management assessment at 0730 on November 24, 1991.

The Resident Inspectors remain onsite and the Region II Incident Response Center and the Headquarters Operations Center remain manned in an enhanced activation state. Region II will be dispatching technical specialists to the site to assist the Resident Inspectors.

The NRC continued to update the State of South Carolina and Federal Agencies. An unauthorized statement was released by a local radio station over the Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) indicating that there was radioactivity being released in the form of steam. Since this may have been misinterpreted as a release to the environment, the State of South Carolina at 1144 issued a clarifying statement over the EBS. There has been significant local area and national media interest in this event.

This information is current as of 1600 on November 23, 1991.

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PDR I&E  
PNO-II-91-074A PDR

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and site  
RII Resident  
PM, NRR

5520: 11/23/91 @ 1639 TO REGIONS AND HQ

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