



GULF STATES UTILITIES COMPANY

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U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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Gentlemen:

River Bend Station - Unit 1
Docket No. 50-458/Report 92-01

This letter provides Gulf States Utilities Company's (GSU) response to the exercise weaknesses noted in NRC Inspection Report No. 50-458/92-01. This letter describes GSU's corrective actions regarding the weaknesses observed during our annual evaluated emergency response exercise conducted on February 26, 1992.

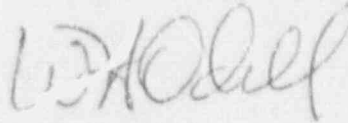
Please note that GSU is revising a corrective action associated with an inadequacy noted in the annual evaluated exercise conducted at River Bend Station March 1, 1989. In our letter dated March 17, 1989, GSU stated that in order to facilitate timely transmission of messages to offsite agencies, the notification message form would be annotated to allow for rapid verbal transmission of information required by NUREG-0654 in the event of the failure of the primary means of notification to offsite agencies. A short notification message form has been developed in order to help meet the 15-minute notification guideline. Therefore, the long notification message form is no longer being annotated.

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Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. L.A. England at (504) 381-4145.

Sincerely,



W.H. Odell
Manager - Oversight
River Bend Nuclear Group

LAE/WC/KES/WMS/kvm
LAE/WC/KES/WMS/kvm

cc: U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
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NRC Resident Inspector
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ATTACHMENT 1

Response to Weakness 50-458/9201-01

REFERENCE

Letter - A.B. Beach to J.C. Deddens, dated March 31, 1992

DESCRIPTION

The inspectors observed that during the exercise vital information regarding a simulated major leak in the feedwater system was not adequately communicated to the Emergency Director.

About 8:30 a.m., a feedwater line break was simulated to have occurred in the steam tunnel. The control room staff recognized that a feedwater line break had occurred at about 8:55 a.m., and the control room staff discussed a probable feedwater line break failure. At that time, the location was unknown to them. This critical information was not conveyed to the Emergency Director and Technical Support Center Manager by the Technical Support Center Operations Coordinator until 10:17 a.m.

GULF STATES UTILITIES COMPANY'S RESPONSE

Vital information regarding a simulated major leak in the feedwater system was not adequately communicated to the Emergency Director. It took approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes for the information to reach the Emergency Director. The control room staff recognized that a feedwater line break had occurred approximately 10 minutes after the initiating event had occurred. The control room staff discussed a probable feedwater line break failure, but the location was unknown to them. It took approximately another 1 hour and 20 minutes before this information was given to the Emergency Director. The necessity of providing vital information or even suspicions of problems to the Emergency Director is very important to the ability of the Emergency Director to mitigate the accident as quickly as possible. Information flow between the control room staff members must be ongoing so everyone is kept informed. The Shift Supervisor must talk directly to the Emergency Director on vital issues. The control room/technical support center Communicator must keep a steady stream of information going to the technical support center from the control room. This type of information exchange will be addressed in future training for these individuals.

ATTACHMENT 2

Responses to Weakness 50-458/9201-02

REFERENCE

Letter - A.B. Beach to J.C. Deddens, dated March 31, 1992

DESCRIPTION

During the exercise, simulated entries were made to the steam tunnel to free stuck valves. Prior to these entries, team members were appropriately briefed regarding external exposure hazards. Team members were told to don a self-contained breathing apparatus to protect themselves from internal exposure. The use of a thyroid blocking agent, while checked-off by the operations support center Radiation Protection Foreman during the team briefing, was not considered because of the use of self-contained breathing apparatus; notwithstanding, the fact that protection factors for self-contained breathing apparatus are finite (e.g., 10,000). Under the extremely high concentrations of airborne radioactive materials involved in the simulated accident for the steam tunnel, exposures could result in a worker's inhaling airborne radioactive concentrations in excess of the 10 CFR Part 20 limits. The scenario data indicated that radioiodine I-131 concentrations were several orders of magnitude above the maximum permissible concentration (MPC). The inspectors noted that after adjusting for protection factor of 10,000 team members entering the steam tunnel could have been exposed to radioiodine concentrations greater than 3,000 MPC in the air inside the self-contained breathing apparatus face piece. This concentration, combined with a 15-minute exposure time, could have resulted in exposures in excess of the 520 MPC-hour quarterly limit.

GULF STATES UTILITIES COMPANY'S RESPONSE

Under extremely high concentrations of airborne radioactive materials, use of an SCBA with a finite protection factor is not enough by itself to provide protection from exceeding the MPC. The importance of understanding the limits of protection provided by an SCBA will be emphasized during the 1992 training cycle. The use of KI as a safety factor and/or necessity will also be provided for emergency response organization management personnel during the 1992 training cycle.