

SEP 05 1984

Docket No. 50-271

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
ATTN: Mr. Warren P. Murphy
Vice-President and Manager
of Operations

RD 5, Box 169
Ferry Road
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

Gentlemen:

Subject: NRC Inspection Report No. 50-271/84-20

This refers to the special NRC inspection conducted on July 17 - 31, 1984, at the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station, Vernon, Vermont, of activities authorized by NRC License No. DPR-28 and to the discussions of our findings held by Mr. W. Raymond with Mr. J. Pelletier of your staff at the conclusion of the inspection.

The inspection was conducted to review an event involving the loss of secondary containment integrity on July 17, 1984. During this period, secondary containment integrity was required by Technical Specifications because irradiated fuel was being moved in the spent fuel pool. The inspection was conducted to determine the event sequence and cause, to evaluate its consequences, and to assess the actions of the plant staff during and subsequent to the event. The inspection findings are discussed in the enclosed NRC Region I Inspection Report.

We have determined that the combination of a failure by plant workers to follow your established administrative controls, together with an inadequate technical review of a mechanical bypass, led to a condition which caused a loss of secondary containment integrity. Although no physical conditions existed which had a radiological impact on public safety when secondary containment was not maintained, the circumstances which caused this condition are of significant concern. It is also noted that this event is a recurrent failure to maintain secondary containment during refueling operations in that required secondary containment was also not maintained on March 21, 1983. These events demonstrate the need for emphasizing to the Vermont Yankee staff the necessity to assure that procedures are rigorously followed and Technical Specification LCO's are not violated.

Apparent violations of NRC requirements are identified in the enclosure to this letter. We are considering these items for appropriate enforcement action which will be transmitted to you by letter at a later time. We want to discuss this matter further during an enforcement conference with you and members of your staff at a September 12, 1984 meeting in the NRC Region I Office, as discussed in a telephone conversation between W. Penniman of your staff and G. T. Meyer of my staff on August 30, 1984.

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Your cooperation with us in this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Richard W. Starostecki, Director
Division of Project and Resident
Programs

Enclosure: NRC Region I Inspection Report
50-271/84-20

cc w/encl:

- Mr. J. B. Sinclair, Licensing Engineer
- Mr. W. F. Conway, President and Chief Executive Officer
- Mr. J. P. Pelletier, Plant Manager
- Mr. Donald Hunter, Vice-President
- Mr. Cort Richardson, Vermont Public
Interest Research Group, Inc.
- Public Document Room (PDR)
- Local Public Document Room (LPDR)
- Nuclear Safety Information Center (NSIC)
- NRC Resident Inspector
- State of New Hampshire
- State of Vermont

bcc w/encl:

- Region I Docket Room (with concurrences)
- Senior Operations Officer (w/o encl)
- Director, DETP
- Section Chief, DPRP

RI:DPRP
Raymond/ec1/dmg
8/29/84

for
gm
8/30

RI:DPRP
Tripp

for
gm
8/30

RI:DPRP
Wenzinger

a/s

RI:DPRP
Starostecki

RS
9/5/84