

LICENSEE EVENT REPORT (LER)

FACILITY NAME (1) PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT										DOCKET NUMBER (2) 0 5 0 0 0 2 5 5										PAGE (3) 1 OF 4																																																								
TITLE (4) Reactor Trip Set Less Than Technical Specifications Limit																																																																												
EVENT DATE (5)										LER NUMBER (6)										REPORT DATE (7)										OTHER FACILITIES INVOLVED (8)																																														
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POWER LEVEL (10) 0 0 1 0										20.402(b)										20.406(a)										80.73(a)(2)(iv)										73.71(b)																																				
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NAME David W. Rogers; Technical Engineer; Palisades																				TELEPHONE NUMBER AREA CODE 6 1 1 6 7 6 1 4 - 1 8 1 2 1 3																																																								
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ABSTRACT (Limit to 1400 spaces, i.e., approximately fifteen single-space typewritten lines) (16)

On November 9, 1984, with the Plant in cold shutdown, the Reactor Protection System (RPS) low-flow-trip for four (4) primary coolant pumps (PCP) operation was determined to be set incorrectly. On December 13, 1984, evaluation of the four-pump trip setting revealed that the RPS low flow trip for three (3) PCP operation was also not set correctly. In addition, the evaluation has shown that the three-pump setpoint is calculated by incorrect methods. As a result, a Technical Specifications safety system setpoint limit was exceeded during previous plant operation.

The incorrect trip settings occurred when a low-flow-trip calibration procedure was not performed and resulted in incorrect values in an RPS surveillance procedure. The incorrect calculation method originated with the controlling procedure and resulted from a misunderstanding of primary coolant flow characteristics.

The calibration procedure was performed and the correct four-pump trip values provided for the surveillance procedure. The calibration procedure requirements will be included in the RPS surveillance procedure. The three-pump low-flow trip has been reset and will result in a trip for any three-pump flow configuration. A corrected three-pump trip calculation will be determined and incorporated in procedures. The trip will be adjusted to allow three-pump operation. Special test procedures will be reviewed and appropriate scheduling provided.

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LICENSEE EVENT REPORT (LER) TEXT CONTINUATION

APPROVED OMB NO 3150-0104

EXPIRES 3/31/85

FACILITY NAME (1) PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT	DOCKET NUMBER (2) 0 5 0 0 0 2 5 5 8 4 - 0 2 3 - 0 2 0 2 OF 0 4	LER NUMBER (4)			PAGE (3)		
		YEAR	SEQUENTIAL NUMBER	REVISION NUMBER			

TEXT (If more space is required, use additional NRC Form 388A's) (17)

On November 9, 1984, with the plant in cold shutdown, the Reactor Protection System [JC] low primary coolant flow trip was determined to be set incorrectly for four primary coolant pumps [AB;P] operation. Technical Specifications Table 2.3.1, Item 2, requires the four-pump low-flow-trip setpoint to be greater than or equal to 95 percent of the nominal four-pump primary coolant flow. During the operating period from July 1984 to September 1984, the trip setpoint did not meet this criteria.

On December 13, 1984, subsequent engineering evaluation revealed that the Reactor Protection System low primary coolant flow trip for three primary coolant pump operation was also set incorrectly. In addition, it was determined that the procedural method for calculating the trip setpoint results in a value that does not meet Technical Specifications limits for three-pump operation. Technical Specifications Table 2.3.1, Item 2, requires the three-pump low-flow trip setpoint to be greater than or equal to 71 percent of the nominal four-pump primary coolant flow. The exact date of occurrence of the calculation error cannot be determined, but is believed to have occurred in the early 1970's. In recent operation, a three-pump condition occurred on September 16, 1984 (reference Licensee Event Report 84-021, dated October 31, 1984), as a result of a primary coolant pump seal [AB;SEAL] failure.

The Reactor Protection System (RPS) low-flow-trip consists of four independent channels. Each channel utilizes a separate set of differential pressure (dp) detectors [JC;PDT]. Flow in each of the four coolant loops is determined by a measurement of pressure drop from inlet to outlet of the steam generators [AB;SG]. The total flow through the reactor core is measured by summing the loop pressure drops across the steam generators and correlating the pressure sum with the pump calibration flow curves. A reactor trip is initiated by two-out-of-four coincidence logic from any of the four independent measuring channels when the flow function falls below a preselected value. Pretrip alarms are initiated if the coolant flow function approaches the minimum required for reactor operation at the corresponding power level. The low-flow-trip setpoint is manually changed for the selected pump configuration by means of a setpoint selector switch.

Test Procedure T-69, "RPS Low Flow Trip Calibration", is used to determine the correlation between steam generator dp and total coolant flow. T-69 also determines the correct dp values for the low-flow-trip. These values are then used in Technical Specifications Surveillance Procedure MI-2, "Reactor Protection Trip Units", to set or verify the low-flow-trip such that it occurs at the setpoint calculated in T-69. Test Procedure T-69 is performed to incorporate changes in steam generator dp that do not correlate to flow changes.

LICENSEE EVENT REPORT (LER) TEXT CONTINUATION

APPROVED OMB NO 3150-0104

EXPIRES 8/31/85

FACILITY NAME (1) PALISADES NUCLEAR PLANT	DOCKET NUMBER (2) 0 5 0 0 0 2 5 5 8 4	LER NUMBER (5)			PAGE (3)		
		YEAR	SEQUENTIAL NUMBER	REVISION NUMBER			
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TEXT (If more space is required, use additional NRC Form 266A's) (17)

Test Procedure T-69 was required to be performed in December 1981 during the plant startup following the 1981 refueling outage. A scheduling error by the plant support staff omitted this test. In addition, Surveillance Procedure MI-2 did not reference T-69 to ensure the correct trip values were available. As a result, the low primary coolant flow trip settings were not updated to account for steam generator dp changes that resulted from tube plugging.

An analysis was performed to determine the operating periods affected by the error in the low-flow-trip setpoint. The analysis has shown that the four-pump low-flow trip setpoint was within Technical Specifications limits, except for the period of operation from July 1984 to September 1984. During the period, all four low-flow-trip setpoints were found to be less than the required minimum value of 95 percent. Using conservative calculations, the greatest error was determined to have been a setpoint of 94.37 percent. It is estimated, based on the extrapolation of the current safety analysis, that the consequences of a four-pump loss of flow would still be acceptable (ie, above minimum departure from nucleate boiling ratio limit), even assuming a trip at 92.37 percent (94.37 - 2 percent uncertainty).

Continued evaluation of the low-flow-trip revealed a similar setpoint error occurred in the three-pump low-flow-trip, as a result of failing to perform Test Procedure T-69. Although the Technical Specifications limit for the three-pump low-flow-trip setpoint was not met, three pump operation has occurred only once in recent operation. Specifically, on September 16, 1984, a primary coolant pump (PCP) was tripped concurrent with plant shutdown, in response to a PCP seal failure.

The analysis performed to evaluate the three-pump low-flow-trip setpoint resulted in additional review of Test Procedure T-69. These reviews identified that the calculational method specified by T-69 to determine the three-pump low-flow-trip setting would result in a trip value that would not meet the Technical Specifications limit for three-pump operation.

T-69 specifies that the three-pump trip be set at 90 percent of the three-pump measured flow. Technical Specifications Table 2.3.1 requires the three-pump low-flow-trip to occur at greater than or equal to 71 percent of the four-pump measured flow. In correlating the three-pump measured flow to the four-pump measured flow, the presence of reversed loop flow in the idle loop was not considered. Also, the steam generator dp detectors provide a positive output for both normal forward flow or reversed loop flow. Neither of these effects were considered when Test Procedure T-69 was originated in 1974. However, calculations using actual three-pump loop flow measurements, based on PCP dp and pump flow curves taken in 1975, indicate that the low-flow-trip would have been set 1.8 percent below the Technical Specifications limit using Test Procedure T-69. A thermal margin analysis has determined that the minimum departure from nucleate boiling ratio limit would be satisfied during a three-pump loss of flow with the RPS trip set with this error. In addition, Technical Specification 3.1.1(c) requires the Plant to be in hot standby within 24 hours with one or more pumps out of service. Three-pump operation is prevented from being a prolonged operating condition by this requirement. Any reliance placed on the three-pump low-flow-trip would have been limited in duration.



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DOCKET 50-255 - LICENSE DPR-20 -
PALISADES PLANT - LICENSEE EVENT REPORT 84-023, REVISION 2 - REACTOR TRIP SET
LESS THAN TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION LIMIT

Licensee Event Report 84-023, Revision 2 (Reactor Trip Set Less than Technical Specification Limit) is attached. The revision provides the results of a thermal margin analysis for the incorrect three-pump low-flow-trip. This event is reportable to the NRC per 10CFR50.73(a)(2)(i), (a)(2)(ii) (a)(2)(v) and (a)(2)(vii).


Ralph R Frisch

Senior Licensing Analyst

CC Administrator, Region III, USNRC
NRC Resident Inspector - Palisades

Attachment

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