

June 22, 1992

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-92-29

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 IV staff on this date.

FACILITY: TU Electric  
Comanche Peak SES, Units 1 and 2  
Docket: 50-445; 50-446

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

SUBJECT: THERMOLAG INITIAL TEST RESULTS

Texas Utilities is continuing with confirmatory testing of their protective fire barrier system (Thermo-Lag) at Omega Point Labs, in San Antonio, Texas, this week. TU Electric has taken the lead in Thermo-Lag testing in order to resolve questions regarding the fire barrier's effectiveness for existing Unit 1 installations and to support the licensing of CPSES Unit 2 later this year. The utility contracted with Omega Point Labs to qualify a protective fire barrier system specifically for CPSES.

The tests consist of a series of 1-hour fire endurance tests on a variety of cable tray and conduit "mock-ups." The "mock-ups" were designed to duplicate actual plant configurations. The fire barrier was installed using stock material and actual plant procedures and personnel. Representatives from the Plant Systems Branch of NRR witnessed the preparation of test specimens at the labs in early May.

The first actual tests occurred on June 17-18, 1992. The tests were performed on 3/4-inch, 1-inch, and 5-inch conduit configurations and a 12-inch cable tray. The 3/4- and 1-inch conduit test experienced temperature readings greater than the test acceptance criteria. Subsequent inspection of the 3/4-inch and 1-inch conduit cable revealed evidence of charring and blistering. NRC standards require no physical fire damage. The 3/4-inch conduit cable suffered damage such that the conductor was visible. The 1-inch conduit cable appeared intact and passed a wet megger test. The 5-inch conduit and 12-inch cable tray both met the test acceptance criteria.

A 30-inch cable tray was tested on June 19, 1992. The Thermo-Lag installation failed during the test. The test was terminated early to assess the damage. Because of the results of the 30-inch cable tray tests, the licensee has postponed testing of the 36-inch cable tray. The licensee is considering additional testing of a modified 36-inch cable tray.

Test configurations were not developed for the 18- and 24-inch cable trays. The licensee is evaluating the applicability of the test results for the installed 18- and 24-inch cable trays. The licensee has established fire watches for all areas required for safe shutdown where Thermo-Lag is installed in Unit 1.

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The licensee has notified the NRC of the potential test failures. The NRC staff is considering generic communication to address the observed test results. NRR and Regional personnel were present at Omega Labs and observed the tests.

The licensee has not issued a press release.

The state of Texas will be informed.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from an SRI on June 19 and an update was provided on June 22 at 9:15 a.m. Region IV has informed EDO, NRR, and PA.

This information has been confirmed with a licensee representative.

CONTACT: L. A. Yandell 817/860-8182

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