July 6, 1992

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-92-30

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: Fort Calhoun Station
Omaha Public Power District
Docket: 50-285

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

SUBJECT: DECLARATION OF AN ALERT AT THE FORT CALHOUN STATION (FCS)

At 11:52 p.m. (CDT) on July 3, 1992, FCS entered an ALERT because of a loss-of-coolant accident that exceeded 40 gallons per minute (gpm).

The licensee was in the process of troubleshooting a 120 Volts-alternating current (Vac) instrument inverter that had been operating erratically, when the voltage output of the inverter began oscillating between 0 and 120 Vac. As soon as the oscillations began, an operator transferred power to the instrument bus from the inverter to the bypass transformer to restore voltage on the bus to 120 Vac. However, the voltage oscillations resulted in the circuitry that senses a loss-of-load condition on the main turbine (i.e., no output from the main generator) to send a signal to the electrohydraulic control system for the main turbine. This resulted in the closure of the control valves that supply steam to the main turbine.

When the main turbine control valves shut, the heat source for the reactor coolant system (RCS) was removed, resulting in high RCS pressure. The high RCS pressure initiated a reactor trip which, in turn, caused a turbine trip. RCS pressure increased to approximately 2420 pounds-per-square-inch gage (psig). It is currently believed that a pressurizer code safety valve (RC-142) opened during the event (the setpoint for RC-142 is 2500 pounds-per-square-inch atmospheric) and failed to reseat. This resulted in the initiation of a loss-of-coolant accident.

The licensee cooled down the plant by using natural circulation because RCS pressure was too low for operation of the reactor coolant pumps. At 6:30 a.m. on July 4, 1992, the licensee down-graded from an ALERT to a Notification of Unusual Event (NOUE) after they confirmed that the RCS leak had significantly dropped below 40 gpm.

The licensee continued with the plant cooldown and placed the plant on shutdown cooling. At 8:40 p.m., the licensee exited the NOUE after reaching cold shutdown conditions. The licensee is currently maintaining the plant on shutdown cooling. All safety and support systems are in normal lineup for cold shutdown conditions.

NRC entered the STANDBY mode at approximately 1 a.m. (CDT) on July 4, 1992, and an Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) was dispatched to the site later that day. In addition, Region IV issued a Confirmatory Action Letter on July 4, 1992. The

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will not return the reactor to a critical condition until NRC has confirmed the licensee's actions for assuring that adequate safety exists for power operations.

The licensee and NRC have issued press releases and have responded to news media inquiries. NRC will conduct a press conference at the site this afternoon.

The States of Nebraska and Iowa were informed.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from the Headquarters Operations Officer at 12:34 a.m. (CDT) on July 4, 1992. Region IV has informed EDO, NRR, and PA.

This information has been confirmed with a licensee representative.

CONTACT: A. Bill Beach 817/860-8223

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