ITT BARTON

INDUSTRY ADVISORY

(May 15, 1996)

MODEL 765/765A TRANSMITTER ZERO & SPAN POTENTIOMETER CONCERNS

ITT Barton supplies Model 765/765A Differential Pressure Electronic Transmitters to the commercial nuclear power industry with harsh environment (LOCA) IEEE-323/344 qualifications. ITT Barton has just recently confirmed that certain lots of the commercial grade potentiometers used in these transmitters have been supplied with lubrication in noncompliance with the engineering/purchasing specification requirements.

This Industry Advisory is applicable only to Model 765 and 765A Electronic Transmitters qualified under ITT Barton Engineering Report R3-765-2, where the accident ambient conditions include pressure exposures in excessive of 10 psig and significant moisture is present. For those installations where the accident environment is relatively benign (outside containment applications) the findings of this Advisory may not apply. Because ITT Barton sales records indicate that many Model 765/765A Transmitters have been purchased for outside containment installations, and it may be possible that some of the installations need not remain functional after the start of the accident, we have left the final determination for 10CFR21 applicability to the notified purchasers of the instruments of concern, consistent with Section 21.21 (b) of 10CFR21. A courtesy copy of this Advisory and a list of the notified customers have been supplied to the NRC consistent with the Defect and Noncompliance Reporting intent of 10CFR21.

Upon request, ITT Barton will supply a set of new potentiometers (zero and span) along with a potentiometer replacement procedure to any customer who determines that replacement of these parts is prudent in their Model 765/765A Transmitters. All new Model 765/765A Transmitters shipped from the ITT Barton factory after the date of this Advisory utilize parts which satisfy the engineering specifications.

Qualification testing has shown that the same lubricated potentiometers are not a concern for LOCA harsh environment installations where the ambient atmosphere does not enter the transmitter electronics case. In the Model 765/765A Transmitter, the electronics case is a deep drawn thin wall stainless steel canister whose back is subject to deflection under elevated ambient pressure conditions (>10 psig) allowing the ambient atmosphere to enter the transmitter electronics case at the torque tube penetration seal. The moisture and chemical environment of the containment LOCA conditions causes a breakdown in the potentiometer lubrication resulting in corrosion of the potentiometer contacts.

Questions regarding this issue should be addressed to J. Anderson, Director of ITT Barton Quality Assurance at (818) 961-2547.

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