

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
Office of Inspector and Auditor

Date of transcription Sept. 25 and Oct. 11, 1984

Report of Interview

James P. O'Reilly, Regional Administrator, Region II, was interviewed regarding the discrepancies in the Reactor Operator Training Program at Grand Gulf Nuclear Station (GGNS) as they related to the restart of GGNS on September 25, 1983. He also was interviewed with respect to a September 23, 1983, meeting between Region II and Mississippi Power and Light officials at Region II. He provided the following information:

O'Reilly proffered the facts as stated in his August 29, 1984, proposed response to Congressman Markey concerning this matter (Exhibit 1).

He also provided information beyond what is stated in the proposed response. Specifically, he did not recall any discussions with [redacted] or any other Region II staff on September 23, 1983, concerning the letter which McGaughy brought to the meeting that day.

Attachment:  
Exhibit 1

8510010096 850923  
PDR FOIA  
REBER85-419 PDR

INVESTIGATION OF Sept 13 & Oct. 11, 1984 at Atlanta, Georgia and Bethesda, Md. File # 84-35  
BY Mark E. Resner, Investigator, OIA Date dictated September 25, 1984

THIS DOCUMENT IS PROPERTY OF NRC IF LOANED TO ANOTHER AGENCY IT AND ITS CONTENTS ARE NOT TO BE DISTRIBUTED OUTSIDE THE RECEIVING AGENCY WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR AND AUDITOR

ENCLOSURE

STAFF RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS  
(QUESTION 2 ANSWERED FIRST TO FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING)

QUESTION: 2: DID REGION II OFFICIALS AUTHORIZE A RETURN TO OPERATIONS AND/OR ALLOW CONTINUED OPERATION SUBSEQUENT TO LEARNING THAT THE QUALIFICATIONS OF GRAND GULF REACTOR OPERATORS WERE PROBABLY FALSIFIED AND THE OPERATORS POTENTIALLY UNQUALIFIED?

ANSWER:

THE DECISION TO ALLOW GRAND GULF TO OPERATE BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 25 AND NOVEMBER 8, 1983 WAS BASED UPON CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF MANY FACTORS INCLUDING CONTINUING EVALUATIONS OF PLANT AND OPERATOR PERFORMANCE AS OBSERVED DURING BOTH ROUTINE AND SPECIAL INSPECTIONS AT THE GRAND GULF SITE. THESE TYPE EVALUATIONS AND JUDGEMENTS ARE MADE THROUGHOUT THE LIFE OF CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATING ACTIVITIES AT ANY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT.

THE JUDGEMENT OF THE STAFF HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN THAT THE OPERATING STAFF AT THE GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION IS QUALIFIED. ALTHOUGH DEFICIENCIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM WERE IDENTIFIED BY REGION II INSPECTION ACTIVITIES, THE OVERALL COMPETENCE OF THE GRAND GULF OPERATORS HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE ACCEPTABLE. THESE EVALUATIONS AND JUDGEMENTS WERE MADE BY EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALS IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRC REGULATIONS AND AGENCY POLICIES. AS WILL BE DISCUSSED, THESE JUDGEMENTS FOR GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION WERE SUPPORTED BY EXAMINATIONS

CONDUCTED BY INDIVIDUALS FROM NRR, REGION I, REGION II, AND REGION III. THE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF THE CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS RELATING TO OPERATOR LICENSING AND RELATED INSPECTION AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES AT GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION SUPPORTS THESE CONCLUSIONS.

IN OCTOBER 1981, THROUGH JANUARY 1982, THE NRC GAVE COLD LICENSE EXAMINATIONS TO 30 OPERATORS AT THE GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION. SIXTEEN OPERATORS PASSED THAT EXAMINATION AND WERE LICENSED. THIS PASSING RATE WAS LOWER THAN NORMAL FOR INITIAL EXAMINATIONS, BUT THE OPERATORS WHO PASSED THE EXAMINATION WERE DETERMINED TO BE QUALIFIED TO PERFORM LICENSED DUTIES. [IN DECEMBER 1982, NRC REGION II ASSUMED OPERATOR LICENSING AUTHORITY. PRIOR TO THIS DATE, ALL OPERATOR LICENSING AUTHORITY AND ACTIVITIES WERE CONTROLLED BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION IN NRC HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON.]

A LICENSE FOR OPERATION AT LESS THAN 5% POWER WAS ISSUED TO GRAND GULF ON JUNE 16, 1982. FOLLOWING LICENSE ISSUANCE, BUT PRIOR TO FUEL LOADING AND INITIAL CRITICALITY, REGION II CONDUCTED A SERIES OF INSPECTIONS TO CONFIRM THAT THE FACILITY WAS READY TO PROCEED. REGION II CONCLUDED THAT THE FACILITY WAS READY AND ON AUGUST 18, 1982, GRAND GULF, UNIT 1, ACHIEVED INITIAL CRITICALITY WITHOUT SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS. FOUR REGION II PERSONNEL WERE PRESENT DURING THAT EVOLUTION.

FOLLOWING INITIAL CRITICALITY, NONNUCLEAR HEATUP, TESTING, AND EVALUATIONS REVEALED INADEQUACIES IN THE DRYWELL COOLING CAPACITY AND AN EXTENDED MAINTENANCE OUTAGE WAS BEGUN, PRIMARILY FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTALLING ADDITIONAL DRYWELL COOLING CAPACITY.

IN FEBRUARY 1983, REGION II CONDUCTED A SPECIAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT INSPECTION AT THE GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION. SUCH ASSESSMENTS ARE BEING CONDUCTED ON ALL UTILITY TRAINING PROGRAMS IN REGION II IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THESE PROGRAMS. THESE ASSESSMENTS ARE POSITIVE INITIATIVES OF REGION II, AND REGION II HAS PROPOSED SUCH ASSESSMENTS AS A NATIONAL PROGRAM ADDITION TO THE OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT AT HEADQUARTERS. DURING THE SPECIAL GRAND GULF TRAINING ASSESSMENT, REGION II BECAME AWARE OF POTENTIAL TRAINING PROBLEMS WHEN ALL THE SUPPORTING RECORDS FOR PREVIOUS OPERATOR TRAINING COULD NOT BE LOCATED. THE LICENSEE STATED THAT THEY WERE AWARE OF THIS DEFICIENCY AND SHOWED THE INSPECTORS SEVERAL PLANT QUALITY DEFICIENCY REPORTS (PQDR'S) THAT HAD BEEN INITIATED BY A MEMBER OF THE TRAINING STAFF OF MP&L. THE PQDRS DESCRIBED THE PROBLEMS AS MISSING OR MISPLACED RECORDS AND COMMITTED TO RESOLVE THIS MATTER BY FEBRUARY 23, 1983. LICENSEE MANAGEMENT CHARACTERIZED THIS MATTER AS A RECORDS PROBLEM. THE EXPLANATION OF MISSING RECORDS WAS A CREDIBLE ONE SINCE THE RECORDS WERE NOT READILY RETRIEVABLE AND THERE HAD BEEN RAPID TURNOVER IN THE LICENSEE'S TRAINING DEPARTMENT. NRC ENFORCEMENT POLICY STATES THAT A LICENSEE WILL NOT BE CITED FOR A VIOLATION IN CASES LIKE THIS WHERE THE LICENSEE HAS IDENTIFIED A PROBLEM AND THE STAFF HAS INDICATIONS THAT THE LICENSEE WILL TAKE PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE CORRECTIVE ACTION. ACCORDINGLY, THE INSPECTORS APPROPRIATELY IDENTIFIED AND DOCUMENTED THIS MATTER IN AN INSPECTION REPORT AS AN UNRESOLVED ITEM THAT REQUIRED STAFF FOLLOWUP.

BETWEEN MAY 1982 AND SEPTEMBER 1983, LICENSEE EXAMINATIONS WERE GIVEN TO CANDIDATES FOR OPERATOR LICENSES BY THE NRC WITH 60 OF 39 CANDIDATES PASSING THE EXAMINATIONS OR REEXAMINATIONS. THIS PASS RATE IS COMPARABLE TO THAT OBSERVED AT OTHER FACILITIES FOR SIMILAR EXAMS. OPERATORS WHO PASSED WERE QUALIFIED TO PERFORM LICENSED DUTIES.

IN JULY AND AUGUST 1983, REGION II CONDUCTED A REQUALIFICATION PROGRAM AUDIT AT GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRC EXAMINER STANDARD ES-601. SIX OF THE SEVEN OPERATORS EXAMINED BY THE NRC DURING THIS AUDIT PASSED THE EXAMINATION. THE LICENSEE REQUALIFICATION PROGRAM WAS FOUND TO BE ACCEPTABLE.

BETWEEN AUGUST 15, 1983, AND SEPTEMBER 1, 1983, REGION II CONDUCTED A SPECIAL INSPECTION TO CONFIRM THE OVERALL READINESS OF THE GRAND GULF FACILITY AND STAFF TO RESUME OPERATION FOLLOWING THE ONE-YEAR MAINTENANCE OUTAGE. MATTERS INSPECTED INCLUDED SURVEILLANCE PROCEDURES, ENFORCEMENT, QUALITY ASSURANCE, FIRE PROTECTION, SECURITY, STAFFING LEVELS, AND TRAINING. DURING THIS OPERATIONAL READINESS INSPECTION, INSPECTORS, IN FOLLOWING UP ON THE MISSING RECORDS, FOUND THAT OPERATOR QUALIFICATION CARDS HAD NOT BEEN COMPLETED AS HAD BEEN INDICATED ON OPERATOR LICENSE APPLICATIONS. THE QUALIFICATION CARDS LIST VARIOUS SYSTEMS AND EVOLUTIONS ON WHICH AN OPERATOR WOULD BE CHECKED OFF DURING THE QUALIFICATION PROCESS. COMPLETION OF THESE QUALIFICATIONS CARDS IS NOT A ROUTINE REGULATORY REQUIREMENT. IN THIS CASE, THE LICENSEE HAD MADE A FORMAL COMMITMENT IN THEIR FINAL SAFETY ANALYSIS REPORT TO USE QUALIFICATION CARDS AND, THEREFORE, WAS REQUIRED TO DO SO. THE LICENSEE ALSO STATED THAT APPARENTLY SOME OF THE TRAINING COURSES HAD BEEN SHORTENED (E.G., A FIVE-DAY COURSE CONDUCTED IN FOUR AND A HALF DAYS). THE INSPECTORS INFORMED PLANT MANAGEMENT THAT FAILURE TO CONDUCT THIS TRAINING WAS CONTRARY TO COMMITMENTS THE UTILITY HAD MADE TO THE NRC AND THAT FAILURE TO MEET SUCH A COMMITMENT COULD BE CITED AS A DEVIATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRC ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES. THE INSPECTORS FURTHER INFORMED PLANT MANAGEMENT THAT THE OVERSTATEMENT OF COMPLETED OPERATOR TRAINING ON INDIVIDUAL LICENSE APPLICATIONS COULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATERIAL FALSE STATEMENT.

DURING A MEETING IN ATLANTA ON SEPTEMBER 23, 1983, REGION II MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS INFORMED LICENSEE MANAGEMENT THAT, AFTER FURTHER REVIEW, THE TRAINING RECORD ISSUE WOULD NOT BE CITED AS A DEVIATION FROM COMMITMENTS, AS PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED IN THE EXIT INTERVIEW, IN THAT WE WOULD EVALUATE OUR INFORMATION TO DETERMINE IF THE INCORRECT APPLICATIONS CONSTITUTED A MATERIAL FALSE STATEMENT. THE STAFF STATED THAT THE LICENSEE MUST DEVOTE PROMPT MANAGEMENT ATTENTION TO COMPLETE THEIR DETAILED INVESTIGATION OF THE NATURE, SCOPE, AND CAUSE OF THE FAILURE OF LICENSED OPERATORS TO COMPLETE QUALIFICATION CARDS AND TO FULLY COMPLETE OTHER TRAINING COMMITMENTS MADE TO THE NRC. THE NRC STATED THAT THEY WISHED TO MEET AGAIN PROMPTLY WITH THE LICENSEE TO REVIEW THE RESULTS OF THEIR INVESTIGATION.

THE ABOVE PROBLEMS, AS VIEWED AT THAT TIME, WERE HISTORIC IN NATURE AND RELATED TO ACTIVITIES THAT OCCURRED WELL OVER A YEAR EARLIER. THESE PROBLEMS REFLECTED A LACK OF OVERSIGHT BY UTILITY MANAGEMENT OF THE GRAND GULF OPERATOR TRAINING PROGRAM; HOWEVER, IT MUST BE NOTED THAT THE RESULTS OF NRC EXAMINATIONS AND OUR CONTINUING OBSERVATIONS ON SITE PROVIDED HIGH ASSURANCE THAT THE OPERATORS WERE QUALIFIED TO PERFORM LICENSED DUTIES.

THE STATEMENT THAT "BY AUGUST 1983, AND CERTAINLY NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 23-30, 1983, REGION II WAS AWARE OF THE ERRONEOUS OPERATOR TRAINING RECORDS AND HAD REASON TO SUSPECT THE COMPETENCE OF GRAND GULF'S OPERATORS" IS MISLEADING IN ITS IMPLICATIONS. THE ERRONEOUS TRAINING RECORDS BECAME KNOWN TO THE NRC, OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. AS TO THE COMPETENCE OF THE GRAND GULF OPERATORS, THE NRC HAD SUBSTANTIAL REASON TO BELIEVE THE OPERATORS WERE QUALIFIED TO PERFORM THEIR LICENSED DUTIES. AS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY, THE OPERATORS HAD PASSED NRC LICENSING EXAMINATIONS AND THE REQUALIFICATION EXAMINATION ADMINISTERED IN AUGUST 1983. THESE RESULTS ARE EVIDENCE THAT THE PERSONNEL WERE QUALIFIED TO

PERFORM LICENSED DUTIES, AND THE REQUALIFICATION PROGRAM AUDIT CONFIRMED THE ABILITY OF THE LICENSED OPERATORS TO RETAIN APPROPRIATE KNOWLEDGE TO CONTINUE TO PERFORM LICENSED DUTIES. IN ADDITION, MOST OF THE OPERATORS TO WHICH THIS ISSUE APPLIED HAD BEEN LICENSED SINCE EARLY AND MID 1982. NRC INSPECTIONS SINCE THAT TIME HAD RESULTED IN THE CONTINUING OBSERVATION OF SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE BY THE LICENSED OPERATORS IN THE CONTROL ROOM. AS FOR THE FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE QUALIFICATION CARDS, NRC CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT THE QUALIFICATION CARDS ARE A SIGNIFICANT ISSUE AS THE PROPOSED ENFORCEMENT ACTION MAKES CLEAR. HOWEVER, THE QUALIFICATION CARDS SHOULD BE PUT IN THE PROPER CONTEXT. COMPLETION OF QUALIFICATION CARDS IS NOT NOW, AND HAS NOT BEEN, A REGULATORY REQUIREMENT, ALTHOUGH THE NRC DOES BELIEVE THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF "QUALIFICATION CARD" TYPES OF SYSTEMS IN TRAINING PROGRAMS IS A GOOD PRACTICE. IN THIS SPECIFIC CASE, THE LICENSEE MADE A FORMAL COMMITMENT TO COMPLETE QUALIFICATION CARDS AND WAS THEREFORE REQUIRED TO DO SO. [REGION II REVIEWED AVAILABLE FINAL SAFETY ANALYSIS REPORTS FOR THIRTEEN OTHER LICENSEES. IN ONLY ONE OTHER CASE WAS THE COMPLETION OF QUALIFICATION CARDS A COMMITMENT.]

THE STATEMENT THAT HAD THE NRC KNOWN THAT THE OPERATOR TRAINING RECORDS HAD BEEN FALSIFIED, NOT ONLY WOULD THE OPERATORS NOT HAVE BEEN LICENSED, BUT, THE LOW POWER LICENSE ITSELF WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ISSUED, ALSO NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED. THIS STATEMENT WAS MORE FULLY EXPLAINED IN A DECEMBER 28, 1983, MEMORANDUM FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, WILLIAM J. DIRCKS, TO FORMER COMMISSIONER, VICTOR GILINSKY. THE NRC WOULD NOT HAVE ISSUED OPERATOR LICENSES IF IT HAD KNOWN THAT TRAINING INDICATED ON THE APPLICATION OR IN THE FINAL SAFETY ANALYSIS REPORT HAD NOT BEEN FULLY COMPLETED AND HAD BEEN FALSIFIED. IF THE OPERATOR LICENSES WERE NOT ISSUED, THEN THE UTILITY WOULD NOT HAVE HAD THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF LICENSED OPERATORS REQUIRED FOR OPERATION, AND THE NRC WOULD NOT, THEREFORE, HAVE

CONSIDERED THE ISSUANCE OF A LOW POWER LICENSE. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT SINCE THE QUALIFICATION CARDS ARE NOT A REGULATORY REQUIREMENT, BUT WERE A LICENSEE COMMITMENT, THE LICENSEE COULD HAVE REQUESTED DELETION OF THAT COMMITMENT PENDING NRC APPROVAL.

THE STAFF PURSUED THIS MATTER VIGOROUSLY. ON OCTOBER 4, 1983, REGION II MET WITH THE LICENSEE MANAGEMENT ON ANOTHER MATTER AND RECEIVED AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE LICENSEE'S INVESTIGATION OF THE OPERATOR TRAINING RECORDS. THE LICENSEE DESCRIBED THEIR FINDINGS TO DATE AND REVEALED, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT IN ADDITION TO INCOMPLETE QUALIFICATION CARDS AND SHORTENED TRAINING COURSES (EXAMPLE: FSAR SAYS A COURSE WILL BE FIVE DAYS; RECORDS SHOW IT WAS COMPLETED IN FOUR AND A HALF DAYS), SOME TRAINING COURSES MAY NOT HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED SINCE IN SOME CASES SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION COULD NOT BE FOUND. THE STAFF STATED THEIR INCREASING CONCERN OVER THESE MATTERS. ON OCTOBER 12, 1983, REGION II MET WITH LICENSEE OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE LICENSEE'S INVESTIGATION OF THIS MATTER. TWO OFFICE OF INVESTIGATION INVESTIGATORS ATTENDED THIS MEETING AT THE SPECIFIC REQUEST OF REGION II. SUBSEQUENT TO THIS MEETING, REGION II REQUESTED A FORMAL INVESTIGATION OF THIS MATTER BY THE OFFICE OF INVESTIGATION.

ON OCTOBER 31, 1983, THROUGH NOVEMBER 4, 1983, REGION II CONDUCTED ANOTHER SPECIAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT INSPECTION AT GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION. THE PURPOSE OF THE INSPECTION WAS TO DETERMINE IF ADEQUATE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS WERE BEING TAKEN TO CORRECT IDENTIFIED DEFICIENCIES, AND TO MAKE ANOTHER EVALUATION OF THE ADEQUACY OF OPERATORS' KNOWLEDGE. DURING THIS INSPECTION, WALK-THROUGH TYPE EVALUATIONS WERE CONDUCTED FOR THIRTEEN LICENSED OPERATORS ON SELECTED SYSTEMS. TEN OF THE OPERATORS WERE JUDGED TO BE QUALIFIED TO PERFORM LICENSED DUTIES. THREE OPERATORS WERE IDENTIFIED AS BEING DEFICIENT IN KNOWLEDGE LEVEL AND WERE



REMOVED FROM LICENSED DUTIES. THIS INSPECTION ALSO REVEALED THAT THE QUALIFICATION CARDS FOR FOUR OTHER INDIVIDUALS WHO HAD BEEN EXAMINED IN SEPTEMBER 1983 HAD BEEN RUSHED THROUGH AND WERE INADEQUATE. ONLY ONE OF THESE INDIVIDUALS HAD RECEIVED A LICENSE AT THAT POINT IN TIME, AND HE WAS REMOVED FROM LICENSED DUTIES. THE OTHER THREE OPERATORS WERE NOT ISSUED A LICENSE. THUS A TOTAL OF FOUR INDIVIDUALS WERE REMOVED FROM DUTIES ON NOVEMBER 4, 1983. AS AGREED BETWEEN THE LICENSEE AND REGION II, DURING THE EXIT INTERVIEW, THE LICENSEE DOCUMENTED THIS AGREEMENT BY A LETTER OF NOVEMBER 10, 1983, TO REGION II.

BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE MANY EXAMINATIONS AND EVALUATIONS PERFORMED, AND ON OUR CONTINUING OBSERVATION OF SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE IN THE CONTROL ROOM, THE STAFF'S JUDGEMENT WAS THAT OPERATOR LICENSE SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION WAS NOT WARRANTED. HOWEVER, BASED ON THE KNOWLEDGE THAT CERTAIN TRAINING HAD NOT BEEN FULLY COMPLETED AND THAT SERIOUS QUESTIONS EXISTED RELATING TO RECORDS, THE STAFF'S JUDGEMENT WAS THAT ADDITIONAL ACTIONS TO CERTIFY THE TRAINING AND KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF ALL OPERATORS WAS REQUIRED BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER. AS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY, OPERATORS WITH DEFICIENT KNOWLEDGE LEVEL AND THOSE WITH RUSHED-THROUGH QUALIFICATION CARDS WERE REMOVED FROM DUTIES. ON NOVEMBER 11 AND NOVEMBER 18, 1983, THE NRC MET WITH THE LICENSEE TO ENSURE THAT A PROGRAM WAS INITIATED TO REVERIFY THE OPERATORS' KNOWLEDGE LEVEL FOR THOSE AREAS IN WHICH SUPPORTIVE TRAINING DOCUMENTATION COULD NOT SUPPORT SUCH A CONCLUSION. AS A RESULT OF THESE MEETINGS, THE LICENSEE DEVELOPED AN EXTENSIVE RECERTIFICATION PROGRAM WHICH BEGAN IN NOVEMBER 1983, AND WAS COMPLETED IN FEBRUARY 1984. THE DECEMBER 5, 1983, CONFIRMATION OF ACTION LETTER CONFIRMED THE AGREEMENT WITH THE LICENSEE TO COMPLETE THIS PROGRAM AND RECONFIRMED THE VERBAL COMMITMENT OF NOVEMBER 4, 1983, AND THE WRITTEN COMMITMENT OF NOVEMBER 10, 1983, THAT CERTAIN OPERATORS HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM DUTIES.

AS A PART OF THE RECERTIFICATION PROGRAM, THE LICENSEE EXAMINED ALL LICENSED OPERATORS ON EACH SYSTEM ON THE QUALIFICATION CARD (68 SYSTEMS). LICENSEE MANAGEMENT, REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER UTILITIES AND FROM THE REACTOR VENDOR, AS WELL AS NRC, MONITORED THIS EXAMINATION PROCESS. OPERATORS WHO WERE WEAK WERE RETRAINED AND REEXAMINED. UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THESE EXAMINATIONS, THE CANDIDATES AND THEIR RECORDS WERE EVALUATED BY AN OPERATOR TRAINING EVALUATION COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF PLANT MANAGEMENT. THE LICENSEE ALSO REVIEWED TRAINING AND EXAMINATIONS OF THE SHIFT TECHNICAL ADVISORS AND SHIFT ADVISORS WHO ARE NOT LICENSED. THE SHIFT TECHNICAL ADVISORS AND SHIFT ADVISORS WERE PROVIDED TRAINING AS NECESSARY AND WERE ALSO CERTIFIED BY THE OPERATOR TRAINING EVALUATION COMMITTEE.

UPON COMPLETION OF THIS PROGRAM, THE NRC REEXAMINED THE TWENTY-SIX LICENSED OPERATORS WHO COMPLETED THIS PROGRAM. TWENTY-THREE OPERATORS SUCCESSFULLY PASSED THE NRC EXAMINATION.

IN ADDITION TO THE TRAINING OF OPERATORS, THE LICENSEE MADE SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES IN THE MANAGEMENT RESOURCES DEVOTED TO TRAINING TO ENSURE THAT FUTURE TRAINING IS COMPLETE AND CONDUCTED IN A QUALITY MANNER.

IN SUMMARY, REGION II PAID CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE LICENSING, TRAINING, AND PERFORMANCE OF OPERATORS AT THE GRAND GULF NUCLEAR STATION. SPECIAL INITIATIVES AND ADDITIONAL INSPECTIONS WERE CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD IN WHICH GRAND GULF PREPARED FOR AND CONDUCTED LOW POWER TESTING. EXPERIENCED INSPECTORS AND EXPERIENCED EXAMINERS FROM DIFFERENT OFFICES OF THE AGENCY, AT THE REQUEST OF REGION II, WERE UTILIZED TO ASSESS THE COMPETENCE OF THE GRAND GULF OPERATORS. THESE EFFORTS WENT FAR BEYOND NRC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS. THE OPERATORS AT GRAND

GULF NUCLEAR STATION ARE, AND WERE, QUALIFIED TO PERFORM LICENSED DUTIES. THEIR SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE DURING LOW POWER TESTING IS CREDIBLE EVIDENCE OF THIS FACT. THE RECERTIFICATION PROGRAM HAS REVERIFIED TO THE LICENSEE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM AND OF TRAINING COMMITMENTS MADE TO THE NRC. THE ACTIONS OF NRC REGION II WERE AGGRESSIVE AND CORRECT, PARTICULARLY WHEN ONE RECOGNIZES THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE AND THE PLANT STATUS AT DIFFERENT TIMES DURING THIS PERIOD. THE DILIGENCE OF REGION II IS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR IDENTIFYING ALL THESE DEFICIENCIES AND IN SEEING THAT THESE DEFICIENCIES AND THEIR ROOT CAUSES WERE CORRECTED IN AN APPROPRIATE MANNER.

QUESTION 1: "DID REGION II OFFICIALS UNNECESSARILY AND/OR INAPPROPRIATELY SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE LICENSEE"? (MP&L, REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF QUALIFICATION CARD ISSUE BEING CONSIDERED A MATERIAL FALSE STATEMENT.)

ANSWER

THE STAFF STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE POSITION THAT NO IMPROPER ACTION WAS TAKEN BY REGION II IN THIS MATTER. THE CONTENTION THAT IT IS UNNECESSARY AND/OR INAPPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH A LICENSEE THE POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MATERIAL FALSE STATEMENTS (MFS) TO THE NRC IS INCORRECT. IT IS COMMON PRACTICE FOR REGION II, WHEN CONDUCTING MANAGEMENT OR ENFORCEMENT MEETINGS WITH LICENSEE MANAGEMENT, TO REMIND THE LICENSEE OF THE NRC'S INSISTENCE THAT THE SUBMITTAL OF INFORMATION TO THE NRC MUST BE ACCURATE AND FACTUAL. ALSO, THE ENFORCEMENT POLICY REGARDING MFS IS ROUTINELY DISCUSSED DURING ENFORCEMENT MEETINGS AND AT OTHER SCHEDULED MEETINGS WITH CORPORATE LEVEL PERSONNEL.

ADDITIONALLY, NRC INSPECTION ACTIVITIES AND THE PRESENTATION OF INSPECTION FINDINGS ARE CONDUCTED IN AN OPEN, CANDID AND STRAIGHT-FORWARD MANNER. IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THE NRC TO USE ENTRAPMENT OR STEALTH TO TRICK THE LICENSEE INTO MAKING ADDITIONAL MFS OR TO ALLOW THE LICENSEE TO CONTINUE IN UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE IN SAFETY-RELATED ACTIVITIES MERELY FOR THE SAKE OF ENHANCING A POTENTIAL FUTURE ENFORCEMENT ACTION. THE PRIMARY THRUST OF REGION II ACTIVITIES WAS TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SAFETY PROBLEMS AND GET THEM FIXED PROPERLY AND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. TOWARD THAT GOAL, IT IS APPROPRIATE TO BE CANDID WITH THE LICENSEE. ALSO, IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THAT IN THIS MATTER, WHEN REGION II WAS

DISCUSSING THIS MATTER WITH MP&L IN LATE 1983, THAT THIS MATTER WAS THEN CONSIDERED TO BE AN OLD ISSUE. THE REACTOR OPERATOR EXAMINATION REQUESTS CONTAINING INACCURATE TRAINING INFORMATION WERE SUBMITTED TO THE NRC BEGINNING IN 1981, AND WERE PART OF NRC'S OFFICIAL RECORDS. IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE, WE NOTE THAT IN REVIEWING THIS QUESTION, REGION II ASKED THE OI INVESTIGATOR WHO PERFORMED THE WORK IF REGION II CONVERSATIONS, OR INDEED ANY OF THE EXTENSIVE REGION II ACTIVITIES IN THIS AREA COMPROMISED OR HINDERED HIS INVESTIGATION IN ANY WAY. THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION WAS AN EMPHATIC NO .

TO SUPPORT THE ABOVE POSITION, THE FOLLOWING DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IS OFFERED BY REGION II. DURING A TRAINING ASSESSMENT INSPECTION (50-416/83-06) OF FEBRUARY 15-17, 1983, REGION II FIRST BECAME AWARE OF POTENTIAL TRAINING PROBLEMS WHEN ALL THE SUPPORTING RECORDS FOR PREVIOUS OPERATOR TRAINING COULD NOT BE LOCATED. THE LICENSEE STATED THAT THEY WERE AWARE OF THIS DEFICIENCY AND SHOWED THE INSPECTORS SEVERAL PLANT QUALITY DEFICIENCY REPORTS (PQDR'S) THAT HAD BEEN INITIATED BY A MEMBER OF THE TRAINING STAFF OF MP&L. THE PQDRS DESCRIBED THE PROBLEMS AS MISSING OR MISPLACED RECORDS AND COMMITTED TO RESOLVE THIS MATTER BY FEBRUARY 23, 1983. LICENSEE MANAGEMENT CHARACTERIZED THIS MATTER AS A RECORDS PROBLEM. THE EXPLANATION OF MISSING RECORDS WAS A CREDIBLE ONE SINCE THE RECORDS WERE NOT READILY RETRIEVABLE AND THERE HAD BEEN A RAPID TURNOVER IN THE LICENSEE'S TRAINING DEPARTMENT. NRC ENFORCEMENT POLICY STATES THAT A LICENSEE WILL NOT BE CITED FOR A VIOLATION IN CASES LIKE THIS WHERE THE LICENSEE HAS IDENTIFIED A PROBLEM AND THE STAFF HAS INDICATIONS THAT THE LICENSEE WILL TAKE PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE CORRECTIVE ACTION. ACCORDINGLY, THE INSPECTORS APPROPRIATELY IDENTIFIED AND DOCUMENTED THIS MATTER IN AN INSPECTION REPORT AS AN UNRESOLVED ITEM THAT REQUIRED STAFF FOLLOWUP.

THE UNRESOLVED ITEM WAS NEXT EXAMINED IN AN OPERATIONAL READINESS TEAM INSPECTION 50-416/83-38 CONDUCTED BY SIX INSPECTORS INCLUDING TWO RESIDENT INSPECTORS FROM OTHER SITES DURING THE PERIOD OF AUGUST 15 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1, 1983. THIS SPECIAL INSPECTION WAS CONDUCTED TO EVALUATE THE OVERALL FACILITY READINESS TO RESUME OPERATION FOLLOWING A ONE-YEAR MAINTENANCE OUTAGE. DURING THIS OPERATIONAL READINESS INSPECTION, INSPECTORS, IN FOLLOWING UP ON THE MISSING RECORDS, FOUND THAT OPERATOR QUALIFICATION CARDS HAD NOT BEEN COMPLETED AS HAD BEEN INDICATED ON OPERATOR LICENSE APPLICATIONS. THE QUALIFICATION CARDS LIST VARIOUS SYSTEMS AND EVOLUTIONS ON WHICH AN OPERATOR WOULD BE CHECKED OFF DURING THE QUALIFICATION PROCESS. COMPLETION OF THESE QUALIFICATION CARDS IS NOT A ROUTINE REGULATORY REQUIREMENT. IN THIS CASE, THE LICENSEE HAD MADE A FORMAL COMMITMENT IN THEIR FINAL SAFETY ANALYSIS REPORT TO USE QUALIFICATION CARDS AND, THEREFORE, WAS REQUIRED TO DO SO. THE LICENSEE ALSO STATED THAT APPARENTLY SOME OF THE TRAINING COURSES HAD BEEN SHORTENED (E.G., A FIVE-DAY COURSE CONDUCTED IN FOUR AND A HALF DAYS). THE INSPECTORS INFORMED PLANT MANAGEMENT THAT FAILURE TO CONDUCT THIS TRAINING WAS CONTRARY TO COMMITMENTS THE UTILITY HAD MADE TO THE NRC AND THAT FAILURE TO MEET SUCH A COMMITMENT COULD BE CITED AS A DEVIATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRC ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES. THE INSPECTORS FURTHER INFORMED PLANT MANAGEMENT THAT THE OVERSTATEMENT OF COMPLETED OPERATOR TRAINING ON INDIVIDUAL LICENSE APPLICATIONS COULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATERIAL FALSE STATEMENT.

REGION II MANAGEMENT EXTENSIVELY DISCUSSED THE INSPECTION FINDINGS INTERNALLY AND REVIEWED THE FILE INFORMATION DURING THE FOLLOWING WEEKS. THIS MATTER RECEIVED CLOSE ATTENTION IN PARALLEL WITH NUMEROUS OTHER TECHNICAL ISSUES THAT NEEDED RESOLUTION PRIOR TO REGION II CONCURRENCE WITH THE STARTUP OF GRAND GULF.

DURING A MEETING IN ATLANTA ON SEPTEMBER 23, 1983, REGION II MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS INFORMED LICENSEE MANAGEMENT THAT, AFTER FURTHER REVIEW, THE TRAINING RECORD ISSUE WOULD NOT BE CITED AS A DEVIATION FROM COMMITMENTS, AS PREVIOUSLY DESCRIBED IN THE EXIT INTERVIEW, IN THAT WE WOULD EVALUATE OUR INFORMATION TO DETERMINE IF THE INCORRECT APPLICATIONS CONSTITUTED A MATERIAL FALSE STATEMENT. THE STAFF STATED THAT THE LICENSEE MUST DEVOTE PROMPT MANAGEMENT ATTENTION TO COMPLETE THEIR DETAILED INVESTIGATION OF THE NATURE, SCOPE, AND CAUSE OF THE FAILURE OF LICENSED OPERATORS TO COMPLETE QUALIFICATION CARDS AND TO FULLY COMPLETE OTHER TRAINING COMMITMENTS MADE TO THE NRC. THE NRC STATED THAT THEY WISHED TO MEET AGAIN PROMPTLY WITH THE LICENSEE TO REVIEW THE RESULTS OF THEIR INVESTIGATION.

THE MP&L VICE PRESIDENT STATED THAT HE WOULD GIVE THE MATTER PROMPT ATTENTION. HE STATED THAT BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF THE NRC INSPECTIONS CONDUCTED ON FEBRUARY 15-17, AND AUGUST 15-SEPTEMBER 1, 1983 (INSPECTION REPORTS 83-06 AND 83-38) HE HAD NOT CONSIDERED THE SITUATION TO BE THAT SERIOUS. HE STATED THAT HE HAD WITH HIM A DOCUMENT THAT HAD BEEN PREPARED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE NRC TO CORRECT THE RECORD ON THE QUALIFICATION CARD MATTER BUT, IN VIEW OF THE SIGNIFICANCE PLACED ON THESE ISSUES BY THE NRC, HE WANTED TO MAKE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO HIM BY HIS STAFF WAS CORRECT. THE STATEMENT ON PAGE 2 OF CONGRESSMAN MARKEY'S LETTER MISREPRESENTS THE FACTS BY STATING THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT REFUSED TO TURN OVER INFORMATION AND POSSIBLE EVIDENCE. SUCH WAS NOT THE CASE. THE MEETING THEN CONCLUDED WITH THE LICENSEE AGAIN STATING THAT PROMPT ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN.

THE STAFF PURSUED THIS MATTER VIGOROUSLY. ON OCTOBER 4, 1983, REGION II MET WITH THE LICENSEE MANAGEMENT ON ANOTHER MATTER AND RECEIVED AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE LICENSEE'S INVESTIGATION OF THE OPERATOR TRAINING RECORDS. THE LICENSEE

DESCRIBED THEIR FINDINGS TO DATE AND REVEALED, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT IN ADDITION TO INCOMPLETE QUALIFICATION CARDS AND SHORTENED TRAINING COURSES (EXAMPLE: FSAR SAYS A COURSE WILL BE FIVE DAYS; RECORDS SHOW IT WAS COMPLETED IN FOUR AND A HALF DAYS), SOME TRAINING COURSES MAY NOT HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED IN SOME CASES SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION COULD NOT BE FOUND. THE STAFF STATED THEIR INCREASING CONCERN OVER THESE MATTERS. MP&L HAD SUBMITTED A LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1983, CONCERNING THE OPERATOR TRAINING DISCREPANCIES, THUS MEETING THEIR COMMITMENT TO FORMALLY INFORM THE NRC OF THESE MATTERS. THE LETTER STATED IN SUMMARY THAT THERE HAD BEEN TRAINING DEFICIENCIES ON PREVIOUS OPERATORS BUT THAT PASSING THE NRC EXAM AND SUBSEQUENT SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE NEGATED THE NEED TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION WITH RESPECT TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS. THE LETTER FURTHER STATED THAT CORRECTIVE ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO PREVENT RECURRENCE. THE NRC STATED THAT WE DISAGREED WITH THE MP&L CONCLUSIONS AND REITERATED THAT THE DETAILED INVESTIGATION BY MP&L MUST BE EXPEDITED AND THE RESULTS PRESENTED TO REGION II AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

ON OCTOBER 12, 1983, REGION II MET WITH LICENSEE OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS THE RESULTS OF THE LICENSEE'S INVESTIGATION OF THIS MATTER. TWO OFFICE OF INVESTIGATION INVESTIGATORS ATTENDED THIS MEETING AT THE SPECIFIC REQUEST OF REGION II. FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH MP&L, REGION II MANAGEMENT MET THE NEXT DAY, AND DISCUSSED THE TRAINING ISSUES AND VERBALLY REQUESTED OI TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TRAINING ISSUES. REGION II BRIEFED, IN DETAIL, OI REPRESENTATIVES ON MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1983, AND URGED HASTE, WHICH OI ASSURED WOULD BE PROVIDED THE FORMAL LETTER FROM REGION II TO OI REQUESTING AN INVESTIGATION WAS SIGNED ON OCTOBER 18, 1983, BUT BY THAT DATE, OI WAS ALREADY PROCEEDING.



IN CONCLUSION, THE STAFF SUPPORTS THE POSITION THAT REGION II ACTED PROPERLY BASED ON THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE NRC AT THE TIME, AND DID NOT UNNECESSARILY OR INAPPROPRIATELY SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE LICENSEE. WE FEEL THAT THE NRC IN THE INTEREST OF SAFETY MUST CONTINUE TO CONDUCT OPEN AND CANDID CONVERSATIONS WITH THE LICENSEE. WHEN LICENSEE PERFORMANCE IN SAFETY-RELATED ACTIVITIES IS OF CONCERN, THE NRC MUST PROMPTLY INFORM THE LICENSEE OF THAT CONCERN, INDEPENDENT OF POTENTIAL OR POSSIBLE FUTURE ENFORCEMENT ACTION.