

APR 10 1979

50-334

MEMORANDUM FOR: File

FROM: D. A. Beckman, Reactor Inspector

SUBJECT: RECORD OF TELECON WITH MR. DAN FORD, UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS, MARCH 20, 1979

I was called by Mr. Ford at 11:50 a.m. on March 20, 1979 to discuss my participation in the Beaver Valley pipestress issue. Mr. Ford opened the conversation by stating that there seemed to be some confusion or lack of clear information regarding the chronology of activities leading to the identification of the problem and that he wanted to clarify what he could through me.

Mr. Ford repeatedly questioned me as to what part the erroneous check valve weights played in the discovery of the pipestress errors and when Region I became aware of the erroneous weights. I told him that the weights initiated the reevaluation which resulted in the anomalous PIPESTRESS/NUPIPE results and that I became aware of the check valve weight errors at or about the time of issue of the December 6 Licensee Event Report update (LER 78-53). He further asked whether I knew what calculations had specifically been performed by the respective computer programs/hand calculations. I told him that I was aware of only those calculations discussed in the LER and in the Stone and Webster (S&W) report on the matter which I had reviewed (S&W Report to Duquesne Light Co. (DLC) which provided the S&W input to the LER).

Mr. Ford also asked if I was aware (or when I had become aware) that S&W "abandoned" the use of PIPESTRESS in 1972 and that they made some (unspecified) modifications to the program. I responded that I was not aware of any "abandonment" and that, to the best of my knowledge, the program was in use through at least 1974 when as-built verifications were performed on the design of the Beaver Valley 1 piping. I further stated that I was not aware of any pertinent modifications to the code during its term of use.

Mr. Ford then shifted his questioning to the chronology of the NRC internal handling of the problem, asking when I had prepared my input, to whom it was sent, when it was sent, etc. I told him that I had prepared the memo during the last week of December through early January and that the memo was forwarded through regional management to headquarters in mid-January. He asked whether the time frames for handling seemed appropriate to me and whether I felt that the memo had been properly expedited. I responded that

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the memo had been given an appropriate priority based on the information available at any point in time and that as we learned more about the problem, the associated activities appeared to have been appropriately accelerated. We also discussed how track items are processed: Region - IE:HQ - NRR. I received no specific questions about the subject track item except as noted above.

During the conversation I indicated that I had held informal discussions with NRR during and after preparation of the memo, including passing the informal copy to the NRR Licensing Project Manager. Mr. Ford asked for the names of the individuals to whom I had spoken. I gave him the names of D. Wigginton and S. Hosford.

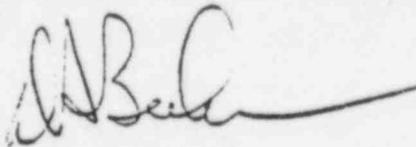
Mr. Ford asked if I knew when S&W, DLC, and/or NRC became aware of the error in the computer program; whether we were aware that it was erroneous during our inspections. I informed him that, while individuals within the NRC questioned the anomalous results, I knew of no one who was aware of the existence of an error or the specifics associated with the error prior to the meetings held by NRR from March 8, 1979. He then asked whether I considered the S&W/DLC action or the evaluations conducted during October-December 1978 to be timely and responsive. I replied to the effect that I was aware that S&W was expending a significant effort on resolution of the problem and that my telephone discussions with the site indicated that considerable DLC emphasis was being placed on S&W's activities but that I did not have first hand knowledge of the matter. I further stated that during my inspections I found that most of the pertinent engineering information was maintained at S&W, Boston, and, therefore, was unavailable to me, making it difficult for me to judge the timeliness and priorities given the matter. Issuance of the December 6 LER appeared timely and addressed the general concerns of this office at the time it was issued. During all other contacts with DLC and S&W, both organizations appeared to be free and open with the available information.

Mr. Ford then stated that he understood, apparently from hearing testimony of the Commission, that the December 6 issue of LER 78-53 constituted a closeout of DLC and S&W activity on the subject. I replied that his understanding was incorrect. The last paragraph of that LER indicated that DLC Engineering was continuing a review of the matter, that further results of that review were to be provided by followup report, that I was aware of an ongoing effort in that area prior to the March 8 meetings, and that the licensee had issued a supplement to the LER subsequent to the issuance of the Show Cause Order on March 13.

Mr. Ford proceeded to ask about my professional background, education, professional experience, tenure with the NRC, etc. I responded that I had been with NRC since October 1977, hold an engineering degree, had been variously employed within the nuclear industry since 1969 including employment with civilian and Navy nuclear ship programs and an architect-engineer (other than S&W). I did not provide names or particulars of my previous employment.

Mr. Ford closed the conversation by asking my personal impressions of the handling that the pipestress matter had received from the NRC. I responded that I considered each phase of the NRC's review and subsequent action to be appropriate and technically responsive to the circumstances as the issue developed (similar to the response given in the fourth paragraph above). I stated that I was encouraged by the escalation of the matter once the seriousness of the errors was identified.

Mr. Ford then provided me with the phone number of the Union of Concerned Scientists' office in Washington, D. C. and asked that I call if I have any present or future concerns where they might be of assistance. The call was cordial and Mr. Ford offered no indication of his reactions to my statements. Messrs. R. Keimig and W. Raymond were present in my office for approximately the last twenty minutes of the thirty minute call but did not participate in the conversation and were not party to the telephone connection.



D. A. Beckman  
Reactor Inspector

cc: E. Jordan, IE:HQ  
W. Russell, NRR ✓  
D. Wigginton, NRR