

DcD

March 13, 1997

Mr. W. Connell
Vice President
Clinton Power Station
Illinois Power Company
Mail Code V-275
P.O. Box 678
Clinton, IL 61727

SUBJECT: NRC EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INSPECTION REPORT 50-461/
97002(DRS)

Dear Mr. Connell:

On January 10, 1997, the NRC completed an inspection at the Clinton Nuclear Power Plant. Subsequent telephone discussion was held with your Emergency Preparedness staff on January 31, 1997. The enclosed report presents the results of that inspection.

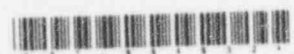
Areas examined during the inspection are identified in the report. Within these areas, the inspection consisted of a selective examination of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, and observation of activities in progress. The purpose of the inspection effort was to determine whether activities authorized by the license were conducted safely and in accordance with NRC requirements. The summary contained in the report provides an overview of our assessment of your performance in the area of Emergency Preparedness, an aspect of Plant Support.

This inspection was to perform the emergency preparedness core inspection as identified in Inspection Procedure 82701, and to review the status of previous open inspection findings. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with those members of your staff identified in the enclosed report.

Emergency Preparedness aspects of the September 5, 1996 seal failure event are discussed in this report. While initial event classification was proper, the Unusual Event declaration was improperly utilized by the operations staff to take steps in the Reactor Recirculation procedure. Event classifications are initiated to activate appropriate response personnel and procedures. Operational decisions should be predicated on operational safety action levels clearly anticipated in operating procedures.

Additionally, the Shift Supervisor during the event had two opportunities to classify an Alert as a conservative decision, but neither of these options were exercised. We also noted that your EP staff evaluation of the event was completed three months after the event and, did not discuss conservative emergency response decision making. No member of your Emergency Preparedness staff participated in the root cause evaluation. As you are aware, other aspects of this event were discussed during the enforcement conferences held during February 1997.

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Based on the results of this inspection, the NRC has determined that a violation of NRC requirements occurred relative to failure to maintain the backup meteorological tower. This violation is cited in the enclosed Notice of Violation (Notice) and the circumstances surrounding it are described in detail in the subject inspection report.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the Commission's regulations, a copy of this letter, the enclosure(s), and your response(s) to this letter will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Sincerely,

/s/ John A. Grobe (for)

James L. Caldwell, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No. 50-461
License No. NPF-62

Enclosures: 1. Notice of Violation
2. Inspection Report 50-461/97002(DRS)

cc w/encls: P. Yocum, Plant Manager,
Clinton Power Station
R. Phares, Manager - Nuclear Assessment
P. J. Telthorst, Director - Licensing
Nathan Schloss, Economist,
Office of the Attorney General
K. K. Berry, Licensing Services Manager
General Electric Company
Chairman, DeWitt County Board
State Liaison Officer
Chairman, Illinois Commerce Commission

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DOCUMENT NAME: G:DRS\CLI97002.DRS (SEE PREVIOUS CONCURRENCE)

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Sincerely,

James L. Caldwell, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

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