

May 2, 1997

EA No: 97-147

Mr. Michael B. Sellman
President
Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company
329 Bath Road
Brunswick, Maine 04011

SUBJECT: NRC INTEGRATED INSPECTION REPORT 50-309/97-01

Dear Mr. Sellman:

On March 15, 1997, the NRC completed an inspection at your Maine Yankee (MY) reactor facility. The inspectors met with Messrs M. Meisner, R. Blackmore and others of your staff at an exit meeting held on April 2, 1997. The enclosed report presents the results of this seven week inspection.

Our inspectors noted three specific actions/decisions by MY which reflect an improved safety focus. They are: the decision to replace, rather than repair, the leaking and susceptible fuel assemblies; the assessment of operator workarounds potentially impacting operators and the related commitment to no workarounds for startup; the initiation of action to review, consolidate, and reduce the maintenance and engineering backlogs.

However, the inspectors identified four apparent violations of NRC requirements which are additional examples of apparent violations noted in NRC Inspection Report 50-309/96-16 which were discussed during the pre-decisional enforcement conference of March 11, 1997. The PCCW and SCCW pump were not qualified for a harsh environment that may result in the turbine building, this is an apparent violation of 10 CFR 50.49. The installation of a 1000 gallon propane tank near the service water pump building and the installation of a temporary drain hose on a spent fuel pool system pipe, both without a safety analysis, were further examples of apparent violations related to the implementation of 10 CFR 50.59. The failure to promptly assess the operability of the service water system and implement necessary corrective actions following an engineering evaluation was another example of failure to implement adequate corrective actions in a timely manner, an apparent violation of 10 CFR 50, Appendix B, Criterion XVI. The design vulnerability of the ventilation system in the circulating pump house could have challenged service water system operability in cold weather. These violations will be processed with those discussed at the pre-decisional enforcement conference of March 11, 1997. At the enforcement conference of March 11, 1997 and the exit meeting of April 2, 1997 you agreed that no additional conference would be needed for these four apparent violations and your written corrective actions should be addressed in response to our future correspondence in this regard.

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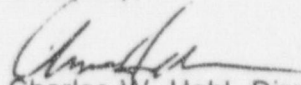


Additionally, the inspectors observed poor performance indicating informality in operations during shutdown conditions. This was reflected by two spills of refueling water storage tank water during testing and the movement of an incorrect fuel bundle in the spent fuel pool. The former example reflects a lack of inquisitiveness when the first spill occurred and the later example reflected inattention to detail on adhering to procedures, but we are crediting you for self identification and good corrective actions for this later case.

Also during the period, a four person team conducted an inspection of your controls in identifying, resolving and preventing problems - a significant problem as noted in the Independent Safety Assessment Report (ISAT) report. This review focused on the new learning process, management of maintenance and engineering backlogs, operator workarounds, vertical audits of safety systems, and off-site safety review committee performance. The learning process reflected a low threshold high volume process but weaknesses were noted. Because of only recent use of this process, the inspectors could not assess the overall effectiveness of the learning process. Actions associated with the maintenance and engineering backlogs were good but weaknesses were still noted. The vertical system audits were thorough for the scope of review, but there was a reduced scope and the resolution of operability concerns were not timely. Actions associated with operator workarounds and off-site safety review committee performance were good with a focus on safety principles.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosures will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room. No response is required to this report.

Sincerely,



Charles W. Hehl, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No: 50-309
License No: DRP-36

Enclosures:

1. NRC Inspection Report No. 50-309/97-01
2. Enforcement Conference Handout/Slides, March 11, 1997
3. Transcripts of Enforcement Conference, (Condensed Format and Normal Format)

Michael B. Sellman
Maine Yankee Atomic Power Co.

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cc w/encl:

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Michael B. Seilman
Maine Yankee Atomic Power Co.

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