

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

NOV 21 19/9

Houston feu

928

The Honorable Lloyd Bentsen United States Senator 912 Federal Building Austin, TX 78701

Dear Senator Bentsen: ..

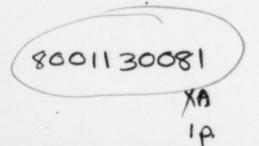
Thank you for your referral to us of a letter to you from Mr. Clifford Gage of Berger, Texas expressing his concerns about construction practices at the South Texas nuclear project.

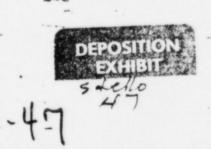
The allegations of structural flaws and threats to inspection personnel referred to by Mr. Gage were previously investigated by the NRC. In light of other agency investigations and new allegations of the same subject matter, we are reopening our investigation. I wish to assure you that NRC considers the questions involved to be serious requiring positive Agency action if founded on fact. When we have completed our investigations, a full report will be made available to your office.

Sincerely,

Victor Stello. Jr.

Director Office of Inspection and Enforcement





15 \$

HOTE TO: H. D. Themburg

1

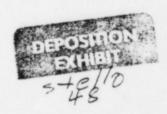
SUBJECT: Letter from Senator Tower received from the Dept. of Energy

ALCONTRACTOR STRATES

As discussed, the subject letter is forwarded to Headquarters for response. Note that an earlier request had been received from Senator Eentson's office relating to correspondence from the same individual and the same subject (AITS HSEOD0466).

Rarl V. Seyfrit Directur

Gecenter 7, 1979



929

Cue reity to Bantson in actul up 12/11 and given to lunde U. with instructions to type an identical response to Sa Tower and execute many meeting contraint the EDO HAITS. Jan int \$002200255 XA 1p. + Sellie) D-48

930



The Honorable John Tower United States Senator 1100 Commerce Street Dallas, Texas 75242

Dear Senator Tower:

Ne

Thank you for your referral to us of a letter to you from Mr. Clifford Gage of Berger, Texas expressing his concerns about construction practices at the South Texas nuclear project.

The allegations of structural flaws and threats to inspection personnel referred to by Mr. Gage were previously investigated by the NRC. In light of other agency investigations and new allegations of the same subject matter, we are reopening our investigation. I wish to assure you that NRC considers the questions involved to be serious requiring positive Agency action if founded on fact. When we have completed our investigations, a full report will be made available to your office.

Sincerely.

00

bcc: w/incoming DOE G. Dan Rembo P. D. Box 35228 2626 Mockingbird Lane Dalles, TX 75235

Houston Lighting & Power Co. Mr. E. A. Turner, V. Pres. Power Plant Construction & Technical Services P. O. Box 1700 Houston, TX 7/001 Lee V. Gossick Executive Director for Operations

\* 1

(Interim Reply) Distribution: G. W. Reinsuth, 1E L. V. Gossick, EDO SECY-79-3326 R. G. Smith, EDO G. Ertter, EDO(8054) T. Rehm, EDO L. N. Underwood, IE H. R. Denton, NRR (H11-002145-H06) C. Kammerer, OCA J. Cook, MPA Central Files IE Reading V. Stello, IE EDQ Reading D. Thompson, IE K. V. Seyfrit, RIV G. C. Gower, IE H. D. Thornburg, IE J. P. Murray, ELD IE Files

SEE PREVIOUS YELLOW FOR CONCURRENCE EDO D: IE ELD N/DD: IE RCI: IE WPU: SH: DLH RCI: IE RCI: IE RShewmaker GwReinwuth HDThornburg DThompson JPHurray VStello 1/ /80 1/ /80 /80 1/14/79 1/ 1/ /80 1/ /80 1/ /80 1/ /80 JOB #

UNITED STATES UCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISCON REGION IV 611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 1000 ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76012

July 26, 1979

926

The Honorable J. J. Pickle Representative, Tenth District, Texas House of Representatives Congress of the United States "242 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pickle:

We are in receipt of your inquiry of July 9, 1979, regarding the discovery of new voids in the concrete containment building at the South Texas Nuclear Project.

On October 20, 1978, Houston Lighting and Power Company (HL&P), in accordance with Federal Regulations, notified the Region IV Office of voids that had been identified in the shell wall of the Unit No. 1 containment building following placement of the 15th lift. The voids were located in the area where the polar crane brackets are embedded in the concrete. Subsequent to the notification and as a part of corrective action, HL&P initiated a program to determine if other voids existed in the containment building shell wall. Additional voids were identified in the 8th lift and the Region IV Office was notified on June 18, 1979.

As a result of the identification of additional voids, HLEP issued an Order to their constructor, effective June 22, 1979, to stop placement of safety-related concrete. Simultaneously, they initiated a program to determine if any additional voids existed and to identify factors that had contributed to void formation. The Region IV Office acknowledged by letter to HL&P on June 22, 1979, an understanding of actions that HL&P committed to take prior to resuming placement of safety related concrete. HL&P is committed to evaluate the causes and extent of the void formation problem and completion of specific corrective actions which include reviews of placement procedures; adequacy of concrete design mix; optimum ratios of quality control personnel to placement personnel and supervisory personnel; preplacement.planning; and design of reinforcing steel and embedded structures. As a result of an extensive review of the items? identified in the letter of June 22, 1979, and because of confidence developed on past placements in safety related structures other than containment, resumption of concrete placement in other safety-related structures was authorized effective on June 29, 1979. The licensee's order to stop placement of concretain the shell wall of the containment building remains in effect pending completi of corrective action and establishment of measures to preclude recurrence.

F7909120297

110

The Honorable J. J. Pickle

Region IV is closely monitoring HL&P's ongoing investigative efforts to determin if any additional voids exist under the liner of the containment building and . will review and evaluate HLaP's corrective actions prior to resumption of concrete placement in the containment building shell wall.

Regarding the specific questions you have raised, the voids resulted from a combination of placement of concrete beneath horizontal channel plate stiffeners in areas of extreme congestion of reinforcing steel and insufficient consolidation of the concrete. This lack of consolidation of the concrete by the work forces, and failure of Quality Control personnel to identify the problem allowed -formation of voids to occur under the horizontal channel plate stiffeners. No design deficiencies have been identified. Repair of the voids is by means of a pressure grout method which has been reviewed by the licensee and by the NRC. No difficulties are envisioned in repairing the voids. To preclude recurrence, the licensee is committed to corrective actions in the areas of better preplanning, increased surveillance during concrete placement, and changes in work practice and placement techniques in areas of reinforcing steel congestion.

The repair of the voids in the area of the polar crane brackets has been complete and each bracket load tested. The polar crane has since been utilized to set the reactor vessel in place.

We trust that this information is fully responsive to your concerns; however, should you have further questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely.

Karl V. Seyfrit Director

bcc: L. V. Gossick, EDO T. Rehm, EDO H. Denton, NRR C. C. Kammerer, OCA SECY (3) J. Cook, MPA V. Stello, IE D. Thompson, IE H. D. Thornburg, IE L. N. Underwood, IE (H11-1978-H06) G. Ertter (ED0-6889) IE Files Central Files IE Reading Files EDO Reading Files K. V. Seyfrit, RIV:IE W. C. Seidle, RIV:IE

927

7/20175