

UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the Matter of  
MS. SUSAN A. BLACKLOCK

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IA 97-059

ORDER PROHIBITING INVOLVEMENT IN  
NRC-LICENSED ACTIVITIES  
(EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY)

I

Ms. Sue A. Blacklock (Ms. Blacklock) was formerly employed by PECO Energy Company at the Limerick Generating Station (PECO, Limerick, or Licensee) as the Primary Chemistry Manager. PECO holds Facility License Nos. NPF-39 and NPF-84 issued by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or Commission) pursuant to 10 CFR Part 50. These licenses authorize PECO to operate the Limerick Station, Units 1 and 2, in accordance with the conditions specified therein.

II

On February 7, 1996, while a Reactor Enclosure Cooling Water (RECW) radiation monitor was inoperable, the Licensee was required, in accordance with Technical Specification 3.3.7.1, ACTION 72, to obtain and analyze at least one grab sample from the RECW system at least once per 24 hours. On that date, the sample needed to be taken by 11:00 a.m. to meet that requirement. The sample was not taken until 12:15 p.m. on that date, approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes after the time it was due. However, the record of the grab sample RECW Surveillance Test (ST-5-026-570-1, "Inop Reactor Enclosure Cooling Water Rad Mon Grab Sampling and Analysis"), signed by a chemistry technician and the chemist (as chemistry supervision), was inaccurate because (1) page one of

attachment 1 of the test record indicated that the time of the sample was 11:00 a.m., and (2) the attached computer printout of the Gamma Spectrum Analysis (required by step 4.3.1 of the surveillance test) also indicated that the sample was taken at 11:00 a.m.. The creation of this inaccurate record caused the Licensee to be in violation of 10 CFR 50.9, "Completeness and accuracy of information."

Afterwards, an investigation of this matter was conducted by PECO, and the NRC was informed of the findings. Subsequently, an investigation was conducted by the NRC Office of Investigations (OI), that determined, based upon the evidence developed during its investigation, and a review of evidence contained in the investigation report provided by PECO, that on February 7, 1996, the former PECO chemist and the PECO chemistry technician deliberately falsified RECW sample documentation, at the direction of Ms. Blacklock, the former PECO Primary Chemistry Manager.

Ms. Blacklock denied, both in her November 7, 1996, interview with OI, as well as during a June 3, 1997 predecisional enforcement conference with the NRC, that she had instructed the chemistry technician to rewrite the surveillance test, and also denied that she had instructed the chemist to change the sample time in the computer. Notwithstanding that denial, both the chemistry technician and the chemist stated in their interviews with OI, that it was Ms. Blacklock's idea to rewrite the surveillance test document and that she subsequently ordered that the sample time in the computer be changed. In addition, the original data sheet corroborates that the chemistry technician originally entered the proper sample time as 12:15 p.m.. Therefore, contrary

to the Ms. Blacklock's denials, the NRC has concluded that Ms. Blacklock instructed the former PECO chemist and chemistry technician to falsify the RECW sample documentation.

III

Based on the above, the NRC has concluded that Ms. Blacklock engaged in deliberate misconduct by directing falsification of the time of the RECW grab sample. Ms. Blacklock's actions constitute a violation of 10 CFR 50.5(a)(1), which prohibits an individual from engaging in deliberate misconduct that causes or, but for detection, would have caused, a licensee to be in violation of any rule, regulation, or order, or any term, condition, or limitation of any license, issued by the Commission. In this case, Ms. Blacklock caused the Licensee to be in violation of 10 CFR 50.9, "Completeness and accuracy of information."

The NRC must be able to rely on the Licensee, its contractors, and the Licensee and contractor employees to comply with NRC requirements, including the requirement to maintain information that is complete and accurate in all material respects. Ms. Blacklock's action in directing falsification of records, and her collusion with others to hide that falsification, constitutes a deliberate violation of Commission regulations, and her doing so raises serious doubt as to whether she can be relied upon to comply with NRC requirements and to maintain complete and accurate information for NRC Licensees and Licensee contractors in the future, and raises doubt about her trustworthiness and reliability.

Consequently, I lack the requisite reasonable assurance that licensed activities can be conducted in compliance with the Commission's requirements and that the health and safety of the public would be protected if Ms. Blacklock were permitted at this time to be involved in NRC-licensed activities. Therefore, the public health, safety and interest require that Ms. Blacklock be prohibited from any involvement in NRC-licensed activities for a period of 5 years from the date of this Order, and if Ms. Blacklock is currently involved with another licensee in NRC-licensed activities, Ms. Blacklock must immediately cease such activities, and inform the NRC of the name, address and telephone number of the employer, and provide a copy of this Order to the employer. Additionally, Ms. Blacklock is required to notify the NRC of her first employment in NRC-licensed activities following the prohibition period. Furthermore, pursuant to 10 CFR 2.202, I find that the significance of Ms. Blacklock's conduct described above is such that the public health, safety and interest require that this Order be immediately effective.

#### IV

Accordingly, pursuant to sections 103, 161b, 161i, 161o, 182 and 186 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and the Commission's regulations in 10 CFR 2.202, 10 CFR 50.5, and 10 CFR 150.20, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, THAT:

1. Sue A. Blacklock is prohibited from engaging in activities licensed by the NRC for 5 years from the date of this Order. NRC-licensed

activities are those activities that are conducted pursuant to a specific or general license issued by the NRC, including, but not limited to, those activities of Agreement State licensees conducted pursuant to the authority granted by 10 CFR 150.20.

2. After the 5-year period of prohibition has expired, Ms. Blacklock shall, within 20 days of her acceptance of the first employment offer involving NRC-licensed activities or her becoming involved in NRC-licensed activities, as defined in Paragraph IV.1 above, provide notice to the Director, Office of Enforcement, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, of the name, address, and telephone number of the employer or the entity where she is, or will be, involved in the NRC-licensed activities. In the notification, Ms. Blacklock shall include a statement of her commitment to compliance with regulatory requirements and the basis why the Commission should have confidence that she will now comply with applicable NRC requirements.

The Director, OE, may, in writing, relax or rescind any of the above conditions upon demonstration by Ms. Blacklock of good cause.

V

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.202, Ms. Blacklock must, and any other person adversely affected by this Order may, submit an answer to this Order, and may request a hearing on this Order, within 20 days of the date of this Order. Where good cause is shown, consideration will be given to extending the time

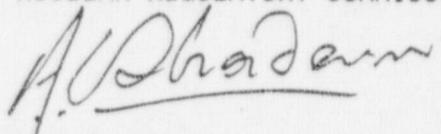
to request a hearing. A request for extension of time must be made in writing to the Director, Office of Enforcement, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Washington, D.C. 20555, and include a statement of good cause for the extension. The answer may consent to this Order. Unless the answer consents to this Order, the answer shall, in writing and under oath or affirmation, specifically admit or deny each allegation or charge made in this Order and shall set forth the matters of fact and law on which Ms. Blacklock or other person adversely affected relies and the reasons as to why the Order should not have been issued. Any answer or request for a hearing shall be submitted to the Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Attn: Chief, Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff, Washington, DC 20555. Copies also shall be sent to the Director, Office of Enforcement, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555, to the Assistant General Counsel for Hearings and Enforcement at the same address, to the Regional Administrator, NRC Region I, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory, 475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania 19406, and to Ms. Blacklock if the answer or hearing request is by a person other than Ms. Blacklock. If a person other than Ms. Blacklock requests a hearing, that person shall set forth with particularity the manner in which that person's interest is adversely affected by this Order and shall address the criteria set forth in 10 CFR 2.714(d).

If a hearing is requested by Ms. Blacklock or a person whose interest is adversely affected, the Commission will issue an Order designating the time and place of any hearing. If a hearing is held, the issue to be considered at such hearing shall be whether this Order should be sustained.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 2.202(c)(2)(i), Ms. Blacklock may, in addition to demanding a hearing, at the time the answer is filed or sooner, move the presiding officer to set aside the immediate effectiveness of the Order on the ground that the Order, including the need for immediate effectiveness, is not based on adequate evidence but on mere suspicion, unfounded allegations, or error.

In the absence of any request for hearing, or written approval of an extension of time in which to request a hearing, the provisions specified in Section IV above shall be final 20 days from the date of this Order without further order or proceedings. If an extension of time for requesting a hearing has been approved, the provisions specified in Section IV shall be final when the extension expires if a hearing request has not been received. AN ANSWER OR A REQUEST FOR HEARING SHALL NOT STAY THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS ORDER.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION



Ashok C. Thadani  
Acting Deputy Executive Director  
for Regulatory Effectiveness

Dated at Rockville, Maryland  
this 5<sup>th</sup> day of August 1997

Ms. Sue A. Blacklock

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