

May 4, 1988

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-88-35

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region IV staff on this date.

FACILITY: ANO - Unit #2
Arkansas Power & Light Co.
Russellville, AR
DN: 50-368

Licensee Emergency Classification:
 Notification of Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

SUBJECT: CONTROL ELEMENT ASSEMBLY (CEA) DROP TIME TESTING

On May 3, 1988, at 5:00 p.m., CDT, the licensee informed NRC Region IV and the senior resident inspector that certain CEAs had exceeded the Technical Specification (TS) limit of three seconds during pre-critical rod drop testing. Four have been confirmed and eight potentially exceed the TS limit. The licensee was using a new method of rod drop testing than has been used during previous refueling outages. The old method involved testing individual CEAs by opening individual CEA breakers and using a visicorder to record the time from breaker opening to CEA 90% inserted. The CEA drop times with this old method typically ranged from 2.65 to 2.85 seconds. The new testing method developed by Combustion Engineering involves testing several CEAs at one time by opening the reactor trip breaker. The control element assembly calculator and core protection computer were used to record the time from reactor trip breaker opening to CEAs 90% inserted. With this new method the highest drop time recorded was 3.2 seconds. Plant startup is on hold pending resolution of this issue. The licensee is reviewing safety analysis assumptions and basis and they anticipate requesting an emergency TS amendment. The Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation has been informed.

Two specialist inspectors from NRC Region IV Division of Reactor Safety are on site along with the resident inspectors to monitor licensee actions.

The licensee has not informed the news media.

Neither the licensee nor the NRC plans to issue a press release.

This information has been confirmed with a licensee representative.

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PDR 1%
PNO-IV-88-035 DCD

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5520: 5/4/88 @ 11:12
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