



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION III  
801 WARRENVILLE ROAD  
LISLE, ILLINOIS 60532-4351

September 24, 1998

Mr. Oliver D. Kingsley  
President, Nuclear Generation Group  
Commonwealth Edison Company  
ATTN: Regulatory Services  
Executive Towers West III  
1400 Opus Place, Suite 500  
Downers Grove, IL 60515

SUBJECT: LASALLE INSPECTION REPORT 50-373/98019(DRP); 50-374/98019(DRP)

Dear Mr. Kingsley:

This refers to the inspection conducted July 17 through August 31, 1998, at the LaSalle Nuclear Power Station. The purpose of the inspection was to determine whether activities authorized by the license were conducted safely and in accordance with NRC requirements. In addition to routine resident inspection during this period, regional inspection staff also assisted in conducting extensive observations of startup activities following the Unit 1 extended outage. At the conclusion of the inspection, the findings were discussed with those members of your staff identified in the enclosed report.

Overall, performance of plant personnel was acceptable during the Unit 1 startup. In particular, operators performed well while effectively controlling plant activities, conducting briefings, communicating with other personnel and each other, maintaining a questioning attitude, and responding to equipment problems. Some violations of NRC requirements and other instances of human performance deficiencies were identified which indicates a need to continue your current focus in this area at LaSalle. For example, a failure of operators to follow procedure resulted in inadvertent start of an emergency diesel generator, and an engineer provided an incorrect core flow value resulting in establishment of non-conservative flow-biased power range scram and rod block setpoints. A Notice of Violation is not being issued for these violations because they were either of minor safety significance or your staff identified these issues and took appropriate corrective actions.

During the Unit 1 startup, several equipment problems challenged plant personnel. In each instance, your staff took appropriate, conservative actions, including shutting down the plant on two occasions, to resolve the problems. One of these shutdowns involved operators manually scrambling the plant in response to a feedwater transient caused by a flow controller card failure. The other shutdown was a pre-planned evolution to address intermediate range monitor failures, failures during testing of the reactor core isolation cooling pump mechanical overspeed trip function, and flow control valve control circuitry noise problems in the reactor recirculation system. None of these equipment problems directly impacted safe operation of the facility. We also continue to recognize the extensive actions taken during the extended outage to address the more significant equipment problems at LaSalle. However, these equipment failures during startup do re-emphasize the need to maintain a focus on resolving Unit 1 equipment problems.

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G PDR

O. Kingsley

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In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Geoffrey E. Grant, Director  
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos.: 50-373; 50-374  
License Nos.: NPF-11; NPF-18

Enclosure: Inspection Report 50-373/98019(DRP);  
50-374/98019(DRP)

cc w/encl: M. Wallace, Senior Vice President  
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