



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

November 13, 1997

LICENSEE: HOUSTON LIGHTING & POWER COMPANY (HL&P)

FACILITY: SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2 (STP)

SUBJECT: TRIP TO FACILITY FOR INTERVIEWS IN PREPARATION OF THE SYSTEMATIC  
ASSESSMENT OF LICENSEE PERFORMANCE

On November 5 and 6, 1997, the Project Director (PD) and the Project Manager (PM) visited STP to conduct interviews in the engineering area as part of the staff's preparation for the twelfth Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) for STP. The licensee's engineering managers presented information in the areas of design engineering, systems engineering, on-line support/maintenance, outage performance, training, and nuclear fuel and analysis. Operational safety culture was discussed with STP engineering and site-level management. The PD and PM also interviewed approximately 16 individuals (that were mostly the plant customers of engineering) and toured the facility with selected design and system engineers. The tour covered the following areas: turbine deck, main feedwater system, auxiliary feedwater system, isolation valve cubicle, safety injection pumps, standby diesel generators, spent fuel pool, simulator, human interface modification in the Unit 2 control room, plant computer upgrade, and the modification of a drainage pathway in the radiological controlled area to avoid processing of non-contaminated fluids.

As a result of the visit, the following information is provided to augment the inspection data.

The licensee appears to have a strong engineering training program. In addition to position specific and general continuing training, approximately 50 engineers have been SRO certified, and the licensee's goal is to have all engineering managers SRO certified. The SRO training lasts about 6 months, including 6 weeks of simulator training. The SRO classes are comprised of 12 individuals. For the upcoming SRO class, 22 site personnel were nominated to attend. Of the 12 that were selected, 5 are from engineering.

Regarding the licensee's quality assurance program in the area of engineering, there were no significant conditions adverse to quality found by the licensee in the last 18 months. This does not appear to be commensurate with the number of NRC inspection findings. The licensee did find numerous lesser significant conditions adverse to quality (at the station and department level) during the same period. In the area of setpoint calculations, the licensee indicated they could have done a better job with regard to impact assessment and interdisciplinary review. It is also noted that there are only five individuals in the licensee's quality assurance staff in the engineering area, covering the following disciplines: civil, electrical, mechanical, instrumentation and controls, and operations. To perform quality

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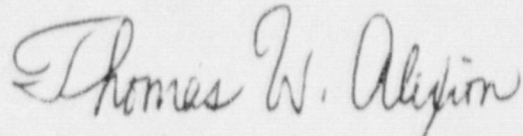


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assurance reviews of other disciplines, the licensee has obtained outside support with appropriate qualifications.

Regarding the licensee's corrective action program, their design engineering department's (DED's) workload is currently less than 1500 actions (1500 actions is their upper limit goal). Only 17 of these actions are significant conditions adverse to quality or conditions adverse to quality - station level. These 17 actions have an average age of 58 days (120 days is DED's upper limit goal).



Thomas W. Alexion, Project Manager  
Project Directorate IV-1  
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-498 and 50-499

cc: See next page

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Orig. signed by T. Alexion

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Docket Nos. 50-493 and 50-499

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