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UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS FIELD OFFICE
REGION IV

ASSISTANCE TO INSPECTION REPORT

January 24, 1983

SUBJECT: COMANCHE PEAK
ALLEGED DEFECTIVE PIPE HANGERS

REPORT NUMBER: A4-83-001

1. On the morning of January 20, 1983, the Region IV Office of Investigations Field Office received a telephone call from a woman identifying herself as Billie Garde, a member of the Government Accountability Project (GAP). Ms. Garde stated that she had tried to contact the NRC Inspectors at Comanche Peak, but got no answer. Ms. Garde said she left a message for the NRC Resident Inspectors on their telephone answering machine at the Comanche Peak site. Ms. Garde stated the licensee at Comanche Peak had called an 8:15 a.m. meeting for January 20, 1983, with [REDACTED] at the site. Ms. Garde indicated she had received information that [REDACTED] had a list of defective pipe hangers which he was going to present to the licensee at the meeting. Ms. Garde indicated that [REDACTED] was a 'whistle blower' who had made statements to [REDACTED] of [REDACTED]. Ms. Garde said she did not believe the NRC was aware of the 8:15 a.m. meeting and wanted to make the existence of the meeting known to the NRC. This reporter told Ms. Garde the NRC Resident Inspector for Comanche Peak would be notified by this reporter of the meeting.
2. Following the telephone call with Ms. Garde, the Reactor Project Section 'A' and Section 'B' Chiefs were notified of the call and requested assistance.
3. On the evening of January 20, 1983, [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] Comanche Peak, was contacted telephonically by this reporter. [REDACTED] stated that he had been hired by [REDACTED] and worked as a welder since that time. [REDACTED] was advised that [REDACTED] name had been given to the NRC by Billie Garde, a GAP representative. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] had talked to Ms. Garde on the previous evening concerning construction defects that existed at Comanche Peak. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] had made an affidavit (Attachment 1) to the intervenor group, CASE, in which [REDACTED] detailed a problem with a particular stainless steel pipe in a safety-related system. [REDACTED] also stated [REDACTED] had concerns with welds in several hangers at the site.

[REDACTED] stated that after making [REDACTED] affidavit to CASE, a licensee representative by the name of Tony Vega directed [REDACTED] to identify the pipe [REDACTED] alleged was improperly welded in [REDACTED] affidavit. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] did not provide the information to Vega, because [REDACTED] was afraid that TUGCO would cover up evidence of the defects in the pipe. When [REDACTED] was asked to describe the problems with this pipe, [REDACTED] stated that there were "hang-me-downs in the pipe." [REDACTED] said these were consumable inserts inside the pipe which had not been consumed in the welding process. [REDACTED] said they could possibly break off and clog the system.

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[redacted] also stated this pipe had been fire boiled with too much heat, and the weld itself had become concave; therefore, convex on the inside creating a flow problem. [redacted] stated that [redacted] also knew of a number of hangers at Comanche Peak that had too much gap when they were fitted up and welded in place. [redacted] said the fillet welds covered the fact that the gaps were excessive.

[redacted] stated that because [redacted] had provided an affidavit to CASE about his concerns he felt his job was protected under the "whistle blowers act." [redacted] said he was scheduled to have a meeting with Vega, the TUGCO QC supervisor, on the morning of January 21, 1983, and that Vega had told him that he might be terminated on that day if he failed to provide the utility with the locations of these defective materials. [redacted] stated that he would be willing to accompany this reporter to the defective parts in the company of TUGCO and Brown & Root representatives.

4. On the morning of January 21, 1983, a Tony Vega, TUGCO QC supervisor, was contacted telephonically by this reporter. Vega was made aware of [redacted] contact with the NRC and his decision to identify the defective pipe and hangers. A meeting was planned with Vega, [redacted] other TUGCO and Brown & Root supervisors, and this reporter at Comanche Peak on the afternoon of January 21, 1983.
5. On the afternoon of January 21, 1982 [redacted] first located a 12 inch stainless steel pipe which was part of spool number 1115 on line CT-1-SB-017, identifying field weld 1-B which was welded by "AZC" on elevation 785 in the Safeguards Building. [redacted] stated the consumable inserts used in the welding of the pipe had not been consumed and were hanging down in the interior of the pipe. [redacted] said these pieces could break off and clog the system. The weld in question was located near the junction of a valve which was temporarily covered with tape and cardboard. Permission was requested and received to remove the covering and the interior of the weld was available for inspection by touch. Inside the pipe, the weld felt convex with one protrusion approximately one half inch in length and a quarter inch width sticking down from a twelve o'clock position in the pipe. The rest of the weld felt smooth and unobstructed.
6. [redacted] then directed the group to a snubber structure assembly in the service water system which contained a skewed weld of tube steel to a plate. This snubber was number SW1-102-106Y-33K. [redacted] stated a portion of the tube steel had an excessive gap where it met the plate, and this gap was covered by a fillet weld.
7. [redacted] then directed the group to room 175 on elevation 790 to a pipe hanger located above the component cooling water heat exchanger for Unit 2. This pipe hanger was number CC-1-087-004-A33A. [redacted] stated that at the point where the curved tube steel met the saddle which covered the pipe, there was an excessive gap which was covered up by a fillet weld. [redacted] stated he had

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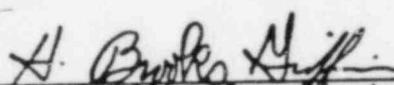
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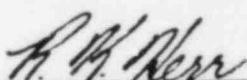
not welded this particular piece but had been working in the area at the time the welding was done and knew the gap was excessive. Brown & Root employees removed the insulation covering this weld and made it available for the NRC's inspection.

- B. [REDACTED] then directed the group to room 162 and pointed out a floor hanger for the service water system. The hanger number was SW1-012-010-A33R. [REDACTED] stated that he had done the welding work on this particular hanger and that one corner had an excessive gap which he remedied by welding a series of stringer beads to fill in the gap. [REDACTED] stated he grinded the welding material flush with the tube steel and then used a fillet weld to complete the job. [REDACTED] stated the gap was in excess of that required by procedure. This anchor hanger was part of the component cooling system.
9. [REDACTED] stated he knew of a socket weld in the valve room (203) that he was not able to fully observe while he was doing the welding. [REDACTED] stated after inspecting room 203, he was no longer able to locate the pipe, and believed the system had been changed and the pipe removed. [REDACTED] indicated he had done work on other hangers on site which had excessive gaps, but he could no longer locate them. [REDACTED] said he presumed the hangers had been changed or removed for some reason. [REDACTED] stated he had no knowledge of other defects which he wished to point out to the NRC or TUGCO at that time. [REDACTED] stated he had been in contact with both CASE and GAP, and he was keeping them apprised of the situation as it developed. [REDACTED] stated it was his intention to testify at the upcoming hearings as to the information he had provided concerning these defects at Comanche Peak.

Attachment (1) - Affidavit of [REDACTED]


H. B. Griffin, Investigator
Office of Investigations Field Office
Region IV

APPROVED BY:


R. K. Herr, Director
Office of Investigations Field Office
Region IV

cc: J. Collins, RIV (w/ attachment)
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