

OFFICE OF ENFORCEMENT
NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT ENFORCEMENT ACTION

Licensee: Southern California Edison Co. (EA 98-226)
San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station
Docket No. 50-361; 50-362

Subject: EXERCISE OF ENFORCEMENT DISCRETION

This is to inform the Commission that staff intends to exercise enforcement discretion per Section VII.B.6 of the Enforcement Policy and not propose a Civil Penalty nor issue a Notice of Violation to Southern California Edison Co. for a Severity Level III Violation. The violation was caused by the failure of a reversing linestarter (due to grit from initial construction on mechanical surfaces) in the electrical power circuit associated with the Train A motor-operated, containment emergency sump outlet valve which would have prevented the valve from opening. With this valve unable to open on a containment sump circulation actuation signal, and with the Train B recirculation system unavailable due to planned maintenance, San Onofre was operated for a period of approximately 27 hours in January 1998 with no post-accident recirculation capability available, contrary to the requirements of the plant's technical specifications.

Given the loss of function of this safety system, this violation would normally have been categorized at Severity Level II in accordance with the Enforcement Policy. However, the risk significance was lessened by the relatively short duration of the loss of safety function (approximately 27 hours) and the recovery potential by plant personnel. In addition, this was the only known failure of a linestarter due to grit in approximately 16 years of operation, indicating that this failure was isolated. Based on these considerations, the staff concluded that this issue is more appropriately classified at Severity Level III. Further, because the failure was considered not preventable by reasonable quality assurance activities and other management controls the staff intends to exercise enforcement discretion as provided for in Section VII.B.6 of the Enforcement Policy and not propose a civil penalty nor cite a violation.

It should be noted that the licensee has not been specifically informed of the enforcement discretion. The schedule of issuance and notification is:

Mailing of Exercise of Enforcement Discretion	November 12, 1998
Telephone Notification of Licensee	November 12, 1998

The State of California will be notified.

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PRELIMINARY INFORMATION - NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE UNTIL
VERIFICATION THAT LICENSEE HAS RECEIVED ACTION

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