

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION III

Report No. 50-255/86021(DRSS)

Docket No. 50-255

License No. DPR-20

Licensee: Consumers Power Company
212 West Michigan Avenue
Jackson, MI 49201

Facility Name: Palisades Nuclear Power Plant

Inspection At: Covert, Michigan

Inspection Conducted: July 9, 1986

Inspector: *J. P. Patterson*
J. P. Patterson

July 25, 1986
Date

Approved By: *W. G. Snell*
W. G. Snell, Chief
Emergency Preparedness Section

JULY 25, 1986
Date

Inspection Summary

Inspection on July 9, 1986 (Report No. 50-255/86021(DRSS))

Areas Inspected: Special, unannounced inspection of the following areas of the emergency preparedness program: emergency detection and classification; notifications and communications. These areas were reviewed particularly as they applied to a Licensee Event Report (LER) 86018 which occurred on May 19, 1986. The inspection was conducted by one NRC inspector.

Results: No violations, deficiencies or deviations were identified as a result of this inspection.

DETAILS

1. Persons Contacted

- *L. Kenaga, Staff Health Physicist
- *J. Brunet, Plant Emergency Planning Coordinator
- M. King, Shift Engineer
- D. Fitzgibbon, Licensing Engineer

*Attended exit interview along with C. Anderson, Resident Inspector.

2. Background

On May 19, 1986, the plant experienced a reactor trip from 97 percent power in response to a high pressurizer pressure condition. Shortly before 2:16 p.m. (EDT), both primary and secondary Electro Hydraulic Control (EHC) power supplies tripped causing a loss of EHC control power and allowing the main turbine governor valves to drift closed. Prior to operator initiation of a turbine trip, the reactor tripped on high pressurizer pressure. The reactor trip occurred shortly after 2:16 p.m. (EDT).

The NRC was initially notified of a four-hour non-emergency report at 2:38 p.m., May 19, 1986. During the initial notification, the licensee identified the trip initiating signal as loss of turbine load resulting in a turbine trip and subsequent reactor trip. Further evaluation by the licensee determined the initiating reactor trip signal was due to pressurizer high pressure and the NRC was again notified at 4:16 p.m. with the licensee stating that the event was a four-hour non-emergency notification. Additional subsequent review of the emergency plan by the licensee resulted in a declaration of a Notice of Unusual Event (NUE), which was declared and terminated at 5:45 p.m. (EDT). The NRC HQ Operations Center was notified of the NUE at 5:52 p.m. The State of Michigan was notified at 5:50 p.m., Van Buren County at 5:48 p.m.

This inspection was made to examine the emergency response activities concerning this event and determine if the licensee properly followed their Emergency Plan and related Emergency Plan Implementing Procedures (EPIPs) including use of the Emergency Action Levels (EALs) applicable to this event.

3. Current Status

The inspector reviewed and evaluated internal documentation regarding this reactor trip due to high pressurizer pressure in addition to the Licensee Event Report sent to NRC. Also, the Shift Engineer (SE), who relieved the SE on duty when the event occurred, was interviewed. The relieving SE recalled that he and other control room staff reviewed the data logger and determined that the reactor tripped on a high pressure transient in the primary coolant system. He confirmed the time of 4:16 as when the NRC was again notified that the cause of the reactor

trip was not due to load loss but was caused by high pressurizer pressure. Other activities related to the event were being reviewed during the delay of approximately 90 minutes before the event was recognized as an Emergency Action Level (EAL) which led to a Notice of Unusual Event. When the NUE was declared and terminated at 5:45 p.m., the required notifications were made to Van Buren County, the State of Michigan, and the NRC within less than ten minutes.

As a result of the failure to identify this incident as an EAL condition, the licensee has already initiated corrective action to prevent recurrence of this event. A temporary change of Attachment 1, Page 15 of 33, Procedure EI-1, under the Miscellaneous category, now states, ". . . for Rx trips from high primary coolant system pressure (Initiating Event) see primary coolant system temperature or pressure category." A copy of this internal memo developed by the Palisades Emergency Planning Group highlighting the key aspects along with the corrective actions taken has been distributed to all Shift Engineers and all Site Emergency Directors.

The inspector reviewed a random sampling of the licensee's internal deviation reports for the last twelve calendar months to determine if any of the reports should have been classified as an emergency.

A total of 36 activations of the Palisades Emergency Plan were identified in three separate Region III inspections conducted from December 1985 to May 1986. These 36 emergency declarations, all NUEs, occurred from May 1985 to May 1986. All events were correctly classified using the correct EAL and all notifications were made within the required times.

4. Conclusion

After conducting interviews and receiving all relevant information related to the May 19, 1986 event, the inspector concluded that the licensee should have identified the occurrence as a reportable emergency event much sooner than 5:52 p.m. when the NRC Headquarter's Operations Officer was finally notified. The fact that the reactor trip was due to a high pressurizer transient in the primary coolant system was known at 4:16 p.m. The EAL for reactor high pressure trip is clearly listed under Primary Coolant System - Temperature or Pressure, Page 25 of 33, Attachment 1, Procedure EI-1.

The Site Emergency Plan, Section 4.1, Emergency Classification System lists the steps, including use of EALs, which should be followed to identify and classify an emergency. At 4:16 p.m. control room personnel identified the events which occurred which would make the declaration of an emergency class appropriate. (Reference NUREG-0654, Appendix 1, Page 1 - 3.) Actions should have followed to classify the event at that time by identifying the EAL described in the previous paragraph.

5. Exit Interview

The inspector held an exit interview on July 9, 1986, with those licensee representatives denoted in Section 1 of this report. The inspector determined from the licensee that none of the information discussed was proprietary in nature. The inspector reviewed the scope of the inspection and stated that the event reviewed may result in a violation of NRC requirements; however, he would withhold final judgement until conferring with Region III management.