

December 4, 1986

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-86-90

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region II staff on this date.

FACILITY: Georgia Power Company
Hatch Units 1 and 2
Docket Nos. 50-321/366
Baxley, Georgia

Licensee Emergency Classification:
 Notification of Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

SUBJECT: AIT DISPATCHED TO INVESTIGATE LEAK FROM SPENT FUEL POOLS

Region II has dispatched an Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) to the Hatch site to investigate the leak of about 50,000 gallons of water from the Hatch Units 1 and 2 spent fuel pools.

Georgia Power discovered the leak at 10:02 p.m. (EST) yesterday, when it was found that water had spilled into an outside area between the Unit 1 and Unit 2 reactor buildings. Hatch Unit 1 is operating at 100 percent power; Hatch Unit 2 has completed a refueling outage, but is in cold shutdown.

An immediate investigation by Georgia Power disclosed that the leak detection annunciator failed to alarm and that the spent fuel pool levels had dropped about five feet. The pools are built so that they cannot be completely drained and the fuel uncovered. Although the pool levels dropped by five feet, the levels did not go below the technical specification limits.

Of the approximately 50,000 gallons of water which leaked, between 5,000 and 10,000 gallons were released through the storm drain system to a swampy area within the owner-controlled property. Plant personnel are building dikes and taking other steps to contain this water. Georgia Power believes no contaminated water has entered the nearby Altamaha River.

Georgia Power also believes that leak may have been caused by a loss of air to inflatable seals in the transfer canal flexible-joint seismic area. A valve which regulates air supply to these seals was found shut. Georgia Power is still investigating why the valve was shut and why the leak detection annunciator failed to alarm.

Coolant sample analysis by Georgia Power indicates that 1.26 times the maximum permissible concentrations of the following isotopes were released: cesium-134, cesium-137, zinc-65 and manganese-54.

The AIT is composed of a section chief from the Division of Reactor Projects, resident inspectors, and a specialist in both radiological effluents and chemistry, and environmental effects.

Media interest has occurred. Georgia Power has issued a press release, and Region II is responding to inquiries.

The State of Georgia has been informed and has dispatched a person to take environmental samples.

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Georgia Power informed the NRC incident response center of this occurrence by telephone at 1:35 a.m. today. This information is current as of 2:30 p.m.

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