

June 9, 1998

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-98-021

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 Region I staff in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania on this date.

Facility

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp.
Vermont Yankee 1
Vernon, Vermont
Dockets: 50-271

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event
Alert
Site Area Emergency
General Emergency
X Not Applicable

Subject: REACTOR SCRAM WITH COMPLICATIONS - MEDIA INTEREST

At 1:32 a.m. on June 9, 1998, an automatic reactor scram occurred from about 68 percent power. The scram was a result of a main turbine trip that occurred due to a reactor vessel high water level condition resulting from an apparent failure of the "A" feedwater regulating valve (FRV). Except for a single control rod position indication problem, the initial plant response to the scram was as expected.

At the time of the event, operators had been reducing power in preparation for taking the "B" reactor recirculating water pump motor-generator (M-G) set off-line due to a high bearing temperature condition. With the power reduction in progress, the "A" FRV did not respond properly in either auto or manual control and caused the high reactor vessel water level condition.

Subsequent to the scram a number of problems occurred that are currently being evaluated, including: (1) a trip of the "C" main feedwater pump (MFP); (2) the auto-start of two MFPs "A" and "B" when the "C" MFP tripped; (3) a Group 1 isolation (MSIV closure) during electrical bus recovery; and (4) the tripping of the "B" Recirculation pump motor generator.

As of 9:00 a.m. on June 9, 1998, the reactor plant is stable in hot shutdown conditions with natural circulation established. Reactor vessel water level and pressure are being controlled manually with the Reactor Isolation Cooling (RCIC) system. Operators are preparing to restore the main condenser to service as the heat sink so that conditions can be achieved to re-establish forced circulation by restarting the "A" reactor recirculating water pump. All ECCS equipment and on-site emergency power systems are available and all vital and non-vital buses have been restored to off-site power supplies.

The licensee has initiated an investigation to understand the causes of the event complications, as well as troubleshooting the balance of plant equipment that failed to respond as expected.

The Senior Resident Inspector was dispatched to the site when the NRC was notified of the event approximately 4:00 a.m. The regional office is making plans to dispatch a special inspection team to review the circumstances associated with the event.

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The licensee issued a press release about the reactor shutdown.
The State of Vermont has been notified.

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