



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION IV

611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-8064

NOV - 8 1999

Otto L. Maynard, President and
Chief Executive Officer
Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation
P.O. Box 411
Burlington, Kansas 66839

SUBJECT: NRC SPECIAL INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-482/99-17

Dear Mr. Maynard:

This refers to the special inspection conducted on September 20-24, 1999, at the Wolf Creek Generating Station facility. The purpose of the inspection was to follow up on the erratic operation of the Train A emergency diesel generator voltage regulator and the potential common mode failure introduced by your staff when defective diodes were installed in both trains of your emergency diesel generators in August 1998. The enclosed report presents the results of this inspection which were discussed with you during an interim debrief on September 24 and during a telephonic exit meeting on October 29, 1999.

The inspection determined that a new emergency diesel generator common cause failure was introduced by the modification which was intended to resolve the erratic operation of the Train A emergency diesel generator voltage regulator. This modification and its implementation resulted in a subsequent failure of the Train A emergency diesel generator and a decrease in the Train B emergency diesel generator reliability. Because the failure mode was cycle (or use) specific, the highest exposure period for the common mode failure occurred approximately 9 months after the modifications were implemented. As soon as the diode failures in the Train A emergency diesel generator were detected, the diodes were removed from both emergency diesel generators. It appears that implementation problems with the Train A modification contributed to an accelerated failure of a Train A diode. This condition was determined to be risk significant. We found that subsequent corrective actions to address the erratic operation of the Train A emergency diesel generator voltage regulator were appropriate and could eliminate the problem.

The inspectors identified that two transients beyond the operating range of the Train A emergency diesel generator had not been evaluated by your engineering staff. This was a violation of your procedures. Subsequent evaluations determined that the transients had no deleterious effect on the emergency diesel generator.

This Severity Level IV violation of NRC requirements is being treated as a noncited violation (NCV), consistent with Appendix C of the Enforcement Policy. This NCV is described in the subject inspection report. If you contest the violation or severity level of this NCV, you should provide a response within 30 days of the date of this inspection report, with the basis for your denial, to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Document Control Desk, Washington, DC 20555-0001, with copies to the Regional Administrator, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region IV, 611 Ryan Plaza Drive, Suite 400, Arlington, Texas 76011,

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the Director, Office of Enforcement, United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, and the NRC Resident Inspector at the Wolf Creek Generating Station facility.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter, its enclosure, and your response, if requested, will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room (PDR).

Should you have any questions concerning this inspection, we will be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,



William D. Johnson, Chief
Project Branch B
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No.: 50-482
License No.: NPF-42

Enclosure:
NRC Inspection Report No.
50-482/99-17

cc w/enclosure:
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Topeka, Kansas 66611-1287

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- E-Mail report to D. Lange (DJL)
- E-Mail report to NRR Event Tracking System (IAS)
- E-Mail report to Document Control Desk (DOCDESK)
- E-Mail report to Richard Correia (RPC)
- E-Mail report to Frank Talbot (FXT)

bcc to DCD (IE01)

bcc distrib. by RIV:

- Regional Administrator
- DRP Director
- DRS Director
- Branch Chief (DRP/B)
- Project Engineer (DRP/B)

- Resident Inspector
- SRI (Callaway, RIV)
- RIV File
- RITS Coordinator
- Branch Chief (DRP/TSS)

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