

December 3, 1999

Mr. J. Langenbach
Vice President and Director
GPU Nuclear, Inc.
Three Mile Island Nuclear Station
P. O. Box 480
Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057-0480

SUBJECT: NRC INTEGRATED INSPECTION REPORT NO. 50-289/99-08

Dear Mr. Langenbach:

On October 23, 1999, the NRC completed an integrated inspection at your Three Mile Island Unit 1 reactor facility. The enclosed report presents the results of that inspection which the resident inspectors discussed with you and your staff during the November 4, 1999, exit meeting.

Your staff performed the Cycle 13 refueling outage in a safe manner. The shutdown evolution was well planned and coordinated. Operator control of outage related evolutions and awareness of changing plant conditions were good. Several major maintenance activities were successfully completed. Most notable were the defueling and refueling of the reactor core, overhaul of the C reactor coolant pump, and once through steam generator eddy current inspections and tube repairs. Your staff responded well to several emergent issues during the outage. The response to the two control element assemblies that failed to fully insert and the resolution of the leaking main flange seal on the C reactor coolant pump were systematically thorough and well coordinated among the various plant organizations. Management oversight of the plant startup was deficient in that although a main steam isolation valve lost its remote operation capability, the plant startup continued with the valve outside the plant design basis without an associated operating procedure change or an engineering review of this degraded condition. The degraded condition was subsequently determined to not be risk significant. We note your commitment to review whether Technical Specification requirements should be established for main steam isolation valves and other Type III containment isolation valves.

Based on the results of this inspection, the NRC has determined that two Severity Level IV violations of NRC requirements occurred. These violations are being treated as Non-Cited Violations (NCVs) consistent with Section VII.B.1.a of the Enforcement Policy. The NCVs involved: 1) locally operating the B main steam isolation valve, after losing the ability to remotely operate the valve from the control room, without completing a TS required procedure change; and 2) not meeting proceduralized requirements on the availability of the boric acid mix tank as an emergency boration path. These NCVs are described further in the subject inspection report. If you contest the violations or severity level of these NCVs, 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, Region I; the Director, Office of Enforcement, United

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Mr. J. Langenbach

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States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; and the NRC Resident Inspector at the Three Mile Island Unit 1 reactor facility.

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

No reply to this letter is necessary. We appreciate your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Peter W. Eselgroth, Chief
Projects Branch 7
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No.: 50-289

Enclosure: NRC Inspection Report No. 50-289/99-08

cc w/encl:

M. J. Ross, Director, Operations and Maintenance

D. Smith, PDMS Manager

M. Laggart, Manager, Licensing and Vendor Audits

E. Fuhrer, Manager, Nuclear Safety and Licensing

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TMI-Alert (TMIA)

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Mr. J. Langenbach

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