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50-285



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 13, 1999

Mr. S. K. Gambhir
Division Manager - Nuclear Operations
Omaha Public Power District
Fort Calhoun Station FC-2-4 Adm.
Post Office Box 399
Hwy. 75 - North of Fort Calhoun
Fort Calhoun, NE 68023-0399

SUBJECT: SITE-SPECIFIC WORKSHEETS FOR USE IN THE NRC'S SIGNIFICANCE DETERMINATION PROCESS

Dear Mr. Gambhir:

As a participant in the Pilot Plant Review of the revised reactor oversight program, you are aware of the NRC's efforts to develop a Significance Determination Process (SDP) for use by the NRC to provide a risk characterization to an inspection finding. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the enclosed Risk-Informed Inspection Notebook which contains site-specific SDP worksheets that inspectors will be using to risk characterize inspection findings. The SDP is discussed in more detail below.

On January 8, 1999, the NRC staff described to the Commission plans and recommendations to improve the reactor oversight process. These recommendations were contained in SECY-99-007, "Recommendations for Reactor Oversight Process Improvements" (available on the NRC's Web Site <www.nrc.gov/NRC/COMMISSION/SECYS/index.html>). The new process, developed with stakeholder involvement, is designed around a risk-informed framework, which is intended to focus both the NRC's and licensee's attention and resources on those issues of more risk significance.

The performance assessment portion of the new process involves the use of both licensee-submitted performance indicator data and inspection findings that have been appropriately categorized based on their risk significance. In order to properly categorize an inspection finding, the NRC has developed the SDP. This process was also described to the Commission in SECY-99-007A, "Recommendations for Reactor Oversight Process Improvements (Follow-up to SECY-99-007)," dated March 22, 1999, also available on the above-noted Web Site.

The SDP for power operations involves evaluating an inspection finding's impact on the plant's capability to limit the frequency of initiating events; ensure the availability, reliability, and capability of mitigating systems; and ensure the integrity of the fuel cladding, reactor coolant system, and containment barriers. As described in SECY-99-007A, the SDP involves the use of three tables. Table 1 is the estimated likelihood for initiating event occurrence during the degraded period. Table 2 describes how the significance is determined based on remaining mitigation system capabilities, and Table 3 provides the bases for the failure probabilities associated with the remaining mitigation equipment and strategies.

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As a result of the recent Pilot Plant review effort, the NRC has determined that site-specific risk data is needed in order to provide a repeatable determination of the significance of an issue. Therefore, the NRC has contracted with Brookhaven National Lab to develop site-specific worksheets to be used in the SDP review. These enclosed worksheets were developed based on your Individual Plant Examination (IPE) submittal that was requested by Generic Letter 88-20. The NRC plans to use this site-specific information in evaluating the significance of issues identified at your facility. It is recognized that the IPE utilized during this effort may not contain current information. Therefore, the NRC conducted a site visit to your facility and discussed appropriate changes with your staff. These changes have been incorporated. We are not requesting written comments on the NRC's work product enclosed with this letter.

If there is a need to conduct additional follow-up visits, we will coordinate our efforts through your licensing or risk organizations as appropriate. If you have any questions, please contact me at 301-415-1396.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

L. Raynard Wharton, Project Manager, Section 2
 Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning
 Division of Licensing Project Management
 Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-285

Enclosure: Risk-Informed Inspection Notebook

cc w/encl: See next page

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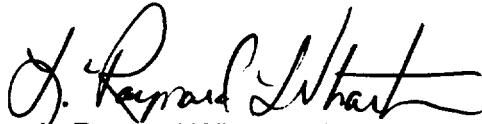
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Sincerely,



L. Raynard Wharton, Project Manager, Section 2
Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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cc w/encl: See next page

Ft. Calhoun Station, Unit 1

cc:

Winston & Strawn
ATTN: Perry D. Robinson, Esq.
1400 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3502

Mr. Steve Floyd
Nuclear Energy Institute
1776 I Street NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006

Mr. Jack Jensen, Chairman
Washington County Board
of Supervisors
Blair, Nebraska 68008

Mr. David Lochbaum
Nuclear Safety Engineer
Union of Concerned Scientists
1616 P Street NW, Suite 310
Washington, DC 20036-1495

Mr. Wayne Walker, Resident Inspector
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Post Office Box 309
Fort Calhoun, Nebraska 68023

Regional Administrator, Region IV
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
611 Ryan Plaza Drive, Suite 1000
Arlington, Texas 76011

Ms. Cheryl Rodgers, LLRW Program Manager
Environmental Protection Section
Nebraska Department of Health
301 Centennial Mall, South
P.O. Box 95007
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-5007

Mr. J. M. Solymossy
Manager - Fort Calhoun Station
Omaha Public Power District
Fort Calhoun Station FC-1-1 Plant
Post Office Box 399
Hwy. 75 - North of Fort Calhoun
Fort Calhoun, Nebraska 68023

Mr. Mark T. Frans
Manager - Nuclear Licensing
Omaha Public Power District
Fort Calhoun Station FC-2-4 Adm.
Post Office Box 399
Hwy. 75 - North of Fort Calhoun
Fort Calhoun, Nebraska 68023-0399

Summary Of Comments

**FORT CALHOUN STATION
PHASE 2 RISK ESTIMATE WORKSHEETS
Technical Update**

ERIN Job No. 159-99-02

Prepared for:

Omaha Public Power District
Fort Calhoun, NE

Prepared by:



2033 North Main Street, Suite 1000
Walnut Creek, CA 94596
(925) 943-7077

September 7, 1999