

Three Mile Island 1

1Q/2008 Plant Inspection Findings

Initiating Events

Mitigating Systems

Significance: SL-IV Dec 31, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Deficient Control of Plant Staff Overtime

The inspectors identified a Severity Level IV NCV of TS 6.8.1.j for not properly implementing and maintaining procedures for controlling plant staff work hours of personnel performing safety-related activities. Procedure LS-AA-119, Overtime Controls, was deficient in that it permitted the plant manager to authorize work-hour deviations for routine refueling outage activities. Consequently, the plant manager authorized over 700 personnel to work greater than 72 hours and up to 84 hours per 7-day period for routine outage support activities during the TMI refueling outage (1R17), which exceeded the TS requirements. The affected workers included reactor operators, senior reactor operators, auxiliary operators, health physicists, key maintenance personnel, emergency response organization members, reactor engineers supporting reactivity manipulations and fuel handling, and engineering and professional personnel performing safety-related work. The licensee entered this issue into their corrective action program (IR 713257).

Changing implementing procedure, LS-AA-119, so that it no longer complies with the facility technical specification for controlling the plant staff overtime has the potential to impact the NRC's ability to perform its regulatory function. The violation affected the Mitigating Systems cornerstone and is more than minor because, if left uncorrected, the excessive work hours would increase the likelihood of human errors during refueling outage activities and response to plant events. This violation is characterized as a Severity Level IV in accordance with the NRC Enforcement Policy. This issue has a cross-cutting aspect in the area of Human Performance, because procedure LS-AA-119 did not provide adequate instructions to provide reasonable assurance that station management would properly control overtime for plant staff performing safety-related functions [H.2(c)].

Inspection Report# : [2007005 \(pdf\)](#)

Significance:  Dec 31, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Deficient Control of Reactor Coolant System Vent Area During Mid-Loop Operation

The inspectors identified a NCV of TS 6.8.1a for failure to maintain the appropriate reactor coolant system (RCS) vent area required by station procedures during mid-loop operation. The reduced vent area degraded operators' ability to add water to the RCS in the event of a loss of decay heat removal (DHR) and caused reactor vessel level indication to be inaccurate. Corrective actions included operator crew briefings, communications between radiological protection and operations personnel, and initiation of IRs 698486 and 705000.

This issue affected the configuration control attribute of the Mitigating Systems cornerstone and was more than minor because it affected the availability of water from the borated water storage tank (BWST) to the RCS in the event of a loss of decay heat removal and caused reactor vessel level indication to be inaccurate. The inspectors determined that although design margin was reduced, the RCS gravity feed and bleed from the BWST function remained operable. The inspectors also concluded that level indication remained sufficient to alert operators if a significant change occurred which would warrant operator actions. Therefore a Phase 2 quantitative assessment was not required and the issue had very low safety significance. The finding has a cross-cutting aspect in the area of Human Performance, because work control during removal of the High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) fans and ventilation hoses from the once through steam generator (OTSG) handholes was deficient. Operators and Radiation Protection (RP)

technicians did not appropriately coordinate work activities to ensure the required RCS vent area was maintained when technicians established radiological postings for the OTSG handhole area [H.3(b)].

Inspection Report# : [2007005](#) (pdf)

Significance:  Dec 31, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Deficient Procedure Causes Failure to Perform Surveillance Testing of Valves in Accordance with ASME OM Code

The inspectors identified an NCV of TS 4.2.2 for failure to test eight safety-related valves in accordance with American Society of Mechanical Engineers Operations & Maintenance (ASME OM) Code requirements. Procedure OP-TM-211-211 contained no procedural steps to verify and document local position indication for eight safety-related make-up system valves. Plant staff revised the procedure and successfully tested the valves prior to the completion of this inspection period.

The finding is more than minor because it affected the procedure quality attribute of the Mitigating Systems cornerstone objective to ensure the availability, reliability, and capability of systems that respond to initiating events to prevent undesirable consequences. This finding was determined to be of very low safety significance since the condition did not involve an actual loss of safety function. This finding has a cross-cutting aspect in the area of Human Performance, because TMI did not ensure complete and accurate procedures were available for testing eight safety-related make-up system valves [H.2(c)].

Inspection Report# : [2007005](#) (pdf)

Significance:  Dec 31, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Deficient Control of Temporary Ventilation During Mid-Loop Operation Leads to Unusual Event

A self-revealing NCV of TS 6.8.1.a was identified for failure to properly coordinate maintenance and operational activities associated with installing the OTSG primary lower manways during mid-loop operation. Installation of the OTSG lower manway cover, while temporary ventilation fans were exhausting air from the OTSG handhole RCS vent, caused an unexpected drop in reactor vessel level indication and declaration of an Unusual Event emergency. Corrective actions included removing the ventilation fans and ventilation hose from the OTSG handholes, restricting the use of the fans, and initiating IRs 698291, 698693, and 699314.

This issue affected the configuration control attribute of the Mitigating Systems cornerstone and was more than minor because this equipment lineup error affected the accuracy of reactor vessel level instrument indication during mid-loop operations, a high risk evolution. The inspectors determined that although all four reactor vessel level instruments were affected, their collective level indications, trends, and alarms provided sufficient information to alert operators in the event of a loss of inventory. Therefore a Phase 2 quantitative assessment was not required and the issue was of very low safety significance. The finding has a cross-cutting aspect in the area of Human Performance, because the installation and removal of temporary OTSG ventilation during installation of the OTSG lower primary manway were not appropriately coordinated to ensure the operational impact on reactor vessel level indication while in mid-loop operation was understood. Consequently reactor vessel level indication was inaccurate and not understood by operations personnel while the plant was in an elevated shutdown risk condition [H.3 (b)].

Inspection Report# : [2007005](#) (pdf)

Barrier Integrity

Significance:  Dec 31, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Ineffective Corrective Actions for Failure to Maintain Structural Design Clearances Inside Reactor Building Containment

The inspectors identified a non-cited violation (NCV) of 10 CFR 50, Appendix B, Criterion XVI, Corrective Action, for ineffective corrective actions to a previously identified NCV regarding a failure to maintain structural design clearances inside the reactor building. This violation involves several permanently installed structures inside the containment that did not meet the required separation distance to the containment liner. The inadequate structural clearance increased the likelihood of damage to the safety-related containment liner during a postulated seismic event. Corrective actions included evaluation of the specific conditions [Issue Reports (IR) 694026, 700592, and 700679] and initiation of actions to move the elevator support structure away from the containment liner during the 2009 refueling outage.

This finding is more than minor because it impacted the configuration control attribute of the Barrier Integrity cornerstone objective to ensure the containment barrier protects the public from radionuclide releases. The containment design parameter for clearance between structures and the containment liner was not maintained. The finding is of very low safety significance because the issue did not involve an actual open pathway in the physical integrity of the containment. This finding has a cross-cutting aspect in the area of Problem Identification and Resolution, because engineering inspections performed as corrective actions to a previous NCV did not thoroughly evaluate the containment liner for additional clearance deficiencies [P.1(c)].

Inspection Report# : [2007005](#) (*pdf*)

Significance:  Dec 31, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Damaged Control Rod Assembly Due to Deficient Fuel Handling Practices

A self-revealing NCV of Technical Specification (TS) 6.8.1.c was identified for failure to properly implement procedures to safely move control rod assemblies (CRAs) within the spent fuel pool (SFP). Fuel handling operators did not monitor the control mast load cell during CRA movement activities and did not verify the transit path (including the control mast) was clear of obstruction prior to bridge or trolley movement. These human performance deficiencies resulted in a damaged CRA and had the potential to damage the affected fuel assembly (FA) cladding fission product barrier. Corrective actions included verifying proper CRA handling equipment operation, increased personnel and supervisory oversight for all FA or CRA moves, event lesson learned briefings, and various procedure revisions to strengthen verification requirements.

The issue was more than minor because it affected the human performance attribute of the Barrier Integrity cornerstone objective to ensure the fuel cladding barrier protects the public from radionuclide release. The CRA was damaged and another CRA had to be selected for core reload. However, the inspectors determined the affected FA fuel clad barrier was not damaged and that containment controls were unaffected. Therefore a Phase 2 quantitative assessment was not required and the issue screened to Green (very low safety significance). The finding has a cross-cutting aspect in the area of Human Performance, because fuel handling operations personnel did not follow procedure requirements for safely moving CRAs in the SFP [H.4(b)].

Inspection Report# : [2007005](#) (*pdf*)

Significance:  Dec 31, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Damaged Fuel Assembly Due to Deficient Fuel Handling Practices

A self-revealing NCV of TS 6.8.1.c was identified for failure to properly establish and implement procedures to safely reload fuel into the reactor vessel core. Fuel handling operators proceeded to insert a FA without properly verifying the fuel movement could be safely accomplished. The FA became hung up on a cable, was damaged, and required replacement and core redesign for cycle 18 operation. Corrective actions included core redesign, a stand-down and event briefing for all refueling personnel, procedure revisions, redesign of the shoehorn cables, a root cause evaluation of fuel handling errors, and additional cameras and viewing monitors to further improve visibility during core reload.

The issue was more than minor because it affected the human performance attribute of the Barrier Integrity

cornerstone objective to ensure the fuel cladding design barrier protects the public from radionuclide release. The FA was damaged and another FA was selected for core reload, requiring core redesign analysis. However, the inspectors determined the affected FA fuel clad barrier remained intact and that containment controls were unaffected. Therefore a Phase 2 quantitative assessment was not required and the issue screened to Green (very low safety significance). The finding has a cross-cutting aspect in the area of Human Performance, because fuel handling personnel proceeded ahead in the face of uncertainty, without stopping to restore proper visibility [H.4(a)].

Inspection Report# : [2007005](#) (*pdf*)

Emergency Preparedness

Significance:  Apr 20, 2007

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Failure to Adequately Critique and Identify a Performance Problem Associated with the Process of Event Classification.

A Green NRC-identified non-cited violation (NCV) of 10 CFR 50.47(b)(14) and 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix E, Section IV.F.2.g, was identified for failure of the licensee's exercise critique process to identify a weakness associated with a risk significant planning standard. The licensee's critique process failed to identify that the Shift Manager made the Unusual Event classification based on an incorrect classification criteria. The licensee entered the deficiency with the exercise into their corrective action program.

This finding is greater than minor because it is associated with the Emergency Response Organization Performance attribute and affected the objective of the Emergency Preparedness Cornerstone to ensure that the licensee is capable of implementing adequate measures to protect the health and safety of the public in the event of a radiological emergency. In accordance with the Emergency Preparedness Significance Determination Process, this finding is of very low safety significance because it was a successful Performance Indicator opportunity and did not affect the outcome of protecting the health and safety of the public.

[The finding had a cross-cutting aspect in the area of problem identification and resolution, because the licensee did not ensure this issue which potentially impacted nuclear safety was promptly identified. The licensee did not implement a corrective action program with a low threshold for identifying issues. Specifically, station personnel did not recognize that the shift manager made the Unusual Event classification based on an incorrect classification criteria. Therefore, the EP drill critique did not identify and correct the event classification deficiency as required by 10 CFR 50, Appendix E, Section IV.F.2.g. Updated by NRC IR 05000289/2007003.]

Inspection Report# : [2007502](#) (*pdf*)

Occupational Radiation Safety

Public Radiation Safety

Physical Protection

Although the NRC is actively overseeing the Security cornerstone, the Commission has decided that certain findings pertaining to security cornerstone will not be publicly available to ensure that potentially useful information is not provided to a possible adversary. Therefore, the [cover letters](#) to security inspection reports may be viewed.

Miscellaneous

Last modified : June 05, 2008