

Columbia Generating Station

3Q/2009 Plant Inspection Findings

Initiating Events

Significance:  Sep 26, 2009

Identified By: Self-Revealing

Item Type: FIN Finding

Failure to Perform Back-up Monitoring

Green. The inspectors reviewed a self-revealing finding for the failure of Energy Northwest to implement the standards and guidance provided in Operations Instruction OI-09, "Operations Standards and Expectations," Revision 24. As a result, an operator failed to ensure that the turbine lube oil exhauster system was adjusted to within its normal operating band after valve manipulations to clear an alarm in the control room. This resulted in a loss of an air-to-oil seal within the main turbine, which ultimately led to a manual plant scram.

This finding is more than minor because it affected the human performance attribute of the initiating events cornerstone's objective to limit the likelihood of those events that upset plant stability and challenge critical safety functions during shutdown as well as power operations. This finding was determined to be of very low safety significance (Green) due to not contributing to both the likelihood of a reactor trip and the likelihood of mitigation equipment or functions not being available. A cross cutting aspect in human performance was identified with a work control component because Energy Northwest failed to incorporate actions to address plant conditions that may affect work activities [H.3(b)](Section 40A3).

Inspection Report# : [2009004](#) (*pdf*)

Significance:  May 08, 2009

Identified By: Self-Revealing

Item Type: FIN Finding

Reactor Scram Due to Seal Oil Leak for Main Generator

The inspectors reviewed a self-revealing finding for the failure of Energy Northwest to implement the standards and guidance provided in Site Wide Procedure SWP-CAP-01, "Corrective Action Program," Revision 17. Specifically, Energy Northwest failed to take prompt corrective action in response to Action Request 1485, dated September 2000, that identified the Cuno filter as a single point vulnerability, which could lead to a plant scram. Action Request 1485 recommended upgrading the type of filter in the seal oil system to a high efficiency duplex filter assembly. Due to a low priority ranking, corrective action was delayed several times. Action Request 1485-4, dated March 11, 2008, documented a scheduling error delaying the corrective action from fiscal year 2009 to fiscal year 2010 or 2011.

The finding was more than minor because it affected the Initiating Events Cornerstone objective to limit the likelihood of those events that upset plant stability and challenge critical safety functions during shutdown as well as power operations. Using Inspection Manual Chapter 0609.4, "Phase 1 – Initial Screening and Characterization of Findings," the finding was determined to be of very low safety significance (Green) because it did not contribute to both the likelihood of a reactor trip and the likelihood that mitigation equipment or functions will not be available. The finding had a crosscutting aspect in the area of problem identification and resolution associated with operating experience because the licensee failed to implement operational experience through changes to station processes, procedures, equipment, and training programs [P.2.(b)].

Inspection Report# : [2009003](#) (*pdf*)

Significance:  Feb 08, 2009

Identified By: Self-Revealing

Item Type: FIN Finding

Failure to Perform an Adequate Site Acceptance Test

The inspectors reviewed a self-revealing finding for the failure of Energy Northwest to perform an adequate site acceptance test of the digital electro-hydraulic system. Specifically, Energy Northwest failed to verify that the quad voter solenoid valves in the digital electro-hydraulic system could be replaced with the main turbine on-line. Consequently, when an on-line valve replacement was performed, the system experienced a pressure transient which resulted in a fast closure of the main turbine governor valves and a subsequent reactor scram. Energy Northwest entered the issue into the corrective action program and conducted a root cause evaluation.

This finding is greater than minor because it was a human performance error that affected the initiating events cornerstone objective to limit the likelihood of those events that upset plant stability and challenge critical safety functions during shutdown as well as power operations. The finding was of very low risk significance because the finding did not result in the loss of a safety function of a single train for greater than its technical specification allowed outage time. This finding was determined to have the crosscutting aspect of human performance with a decision making component, because Energy Northwest failed to perform an adequate effectiveness review to identify the possible unintended consequences of on-line replacement of quad voter solenoid valves in the digital electro-hydraulic system [H.1.b].

Inspection Report# : [2009002](#) (*pdf*)

Mitigating Systems

Significance:  Sep 26, 2009

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Failure to Adequately Implement the Requirements of Procedure SOP-ENTRY-DW

Green. The inspectors identified a noncited violation of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix B, Criterion V, “Instructions, Procedures, and Drawings,” for Energy Northwest’s failure to effectively implement procedure SOP-ENTRY-DW, “Personnel Entry into Drywell.” Energy Northwest’s corrective actions for this issue included removing the NRC identified debris from the drywell, informing personnel of the ineffective drywell cleaning, and conducting an assessment to determine more effective methods for cleaning the drywell during future outages.

The finding was greater than minor because, if left uncorrected, it could result in the continued accumulation of foreign material in the drywell. The accumulation of foreign material could result in blocking the emergency core cooling system suction strainers during normal operation or accident conditions. The finding was determined to be of very low risk significance (Green) since the debris did not result in an actual loss of safety function for any system and because the debris was removed by the licensee. A crosscutting aspect in problem identification and resolution, with a corrective action program component was identified in that the licensee failed to ensure that corrective actions were taken to address a previously identified adverse trend [P.1(d)](Section 1R20).

Inspection Report# : [2009004](#) (*pdf*)

Significance:  Mar 28, 2009

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Failure to perform engineering evaluation to determine seismic qualification of safety-related equipment

The inspectors identified a noncited violation of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix B, Criterion V, “Instructions, Procedures, and Drawings,” for Energy Northwest’s failure to follow procedure PPM 10.2.53, “Seismic Requirements for Scaffolding, Ladders, Man-Lifts, Tool Gang Boxes, Hoists, Metal Storage Cabinets, and Temporary Shielding Racks,” Revision 26. Specifically, the position of equipment is required to meet specific criteria to prevent damage to safety related equipment during a seismic event. Contrary to this procedure, the inspectors identified that equipment was routinely positioned next to safety-related equipment without a supporting engineering evaluation.

This finding is greater than minor because it was a human performance error which affected the mitigating systems

cornerstone objective to ensure the availability and reliability of systems that respond to initiating events to prevent undesirable consequences. This was determined to be consistent with NRC Manual Chapter 0612, "Power Reactor Inspection Reports," Appendix E, Example 4.a. for being more than minor risk significance because Energy Northwest had routinely failed to perform the requisite engineering evaluation. The finding was determined to be of very low risk significance (Green) because no actual loss of safety function occurred and the finding did not screen as potentially risk significant due to external events. Specifically, the as-found position of the equipment was determined to not adversely affect seismic qualification of the affected safety-related components. A crosscutting aspect in human performance with a work control component was identified in that Energy Northwest failed to appropriately plan work on multiple occasions, resulting in job site conditions which may have impacted plant components [H.3.a].

Inspection Report# : [2009002](#) (pdf)

Significance:  Dec 31, 2008

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Failure to Follow Procedures during an Overhaul of Emergency Diesel Engine 1A1

Green. The inspectors identified a noncited violation (NCV) of Technical Specification 5.4.1.a (Procedures) for Energy Northwest's failure to follow site procedures during an overhaul of the Division 1 emergency diesel engine in 2003. Specifically, care was not exercised to protect diesel fuel oil injector line seating surfaces from mechanical damage during maintenance. In addition, the procedure was inadequate, in that it required an inspection but contained no acceptance criteria. As a result, seating surfaces of diesel fuel oil injector lines were damaged during maintenance and fuel oil leaked into the lubricating oil system during emergency diesel generator operation. The leakage was not immediately noticed during postmaintenance testing (2003), but was identified substantially later during lubricating oil viscosity testing (2008). Fuel leakage into the lubricating oil system has rendered emergency diesel generators inoperable at other sites and the vendor stipulated that this condition can result in crankcase explosions and severe damage. The licensee's initial review of the issue failed to identify the inadequate inspection requirements. Further, the licensee did not follow the vendor manual recommendation of replacing the lubricating oil filter until identified by the inspectors. Energy Northwest entered the issues into the corrective action program as Condition Report 187580.

The finding was more than minor because, if left uncorrected, it could result in a more significant safety concern. Specifically, postmaintenance testing may not immediately identify fuel injector damage following maintenance and the damage could render the emergency diesel generator inoperable during event response. Using the Manual Chapter 0609, "Significance Determination Process," Phase 1 screening worksheet, the finding was of very low risk significance (Green) because it was a qualification deficiency confirmed not to result in a loss of emergency diesel generator operability. While the procedural deficiencies were aged, the licensee missed a recent opportunity in 2008 to identify the problems because they repaired the diesel but did not evaluate the adverse condition. This issue had a crosscutting aspect associated with Problem Identification and Resolution (corrective action program component), in that the licensee failed to thoroughly evaluate the problem such that the resolution addressed the cause [P.1(c)] (Section 1R12).

Inspection Report# : [2008005](#) (pdf)

Significance:  Dec 31, 2008

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Failure to Translate Design Basis into Procedures for Residual Heat Removal Operating Modes

Green. The inspectors identified a noncited violation of 10 CFR 50, Appendix B, Criterion III (Design Control) for the failure to properly translate the design basis of the facility into procedures. Specifically, when the residual heat removal system, Trains A, B or C, were used in the suppression pool cooling or mixing modes of operation, the trains were vulnerable to water hammer events that could challenge train operability during a loss of coolant accident coincident with a loss of offsite power. The licensee entered the condition into their corrective action program as Condition Report 182958.

The finding was more than minor because, if left uncorrected, it would lead to a more significant safety concern. Specifically, the licensee could use multiple trains of residual heat removal in the suppression pool cooling and

mixing modes of operations, which could make them incapable of performing their safety functions during a loss of coolant accident coincident with a loss of offsite power. Using the Manual Chapter 0609, "Significance Determination Process," Phase 1 screening worksheet, the issue screened as having very low safety significance (Green) because the finding: 1) was a design or qualification deficiency that could result in loss of operability or functionality; 2) did not involve an actual loss of system safety function; 3) did not result in a loss of a single train for greater than the technical specification allowed outage time; 4) did not result in a loss of safety function of one or risk significant trains of equipment for more than 24 hours; and 5) did not screen as potentially risk significant due to a seismic, flooding, or severe weather initiating event. This finding did not have a crosscutting aspect because the concern involved an older design issue (Section 4OA5).

Inspection Report# : [2008005](#) (*pdf*)

Significance:  Jul 13, 2006

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: AV Apparent Violation

Lack of an Evaluation of the Effect of Fire on the Reactor Protection System / Scram Capability

The team identified an apparent violation (AV) of License Condition 2.C.(14) concerning failure to evaluate the potential effect of fire damage on the Reactor Protection System circuits relied upon for reactor scram capability in the approved fire protection program. Although the reactor protection and control rod drive systems are identified as part of the minimum safe shutdown systems necessary to accomplish the reactivity control shutdown function, and are credited in the post-fire safe shutdown procedures developed by the licensee, the potential for fire to cause a loss of this required shutdown function had not been evaluated. The licensee's post-fire safe shutdown analysis included the assumption that the operator would initiate and confirm shutdown before control circuits were damaged, therefore, evaluation of the effects of fire damage to the reactor protection (RPS) and control rod drive (CRD) systems was not necessary. Review of the RPS circuits identified the potential for a fire in the control room to prevent the scram of one rod group.

The finding is greater than minor in that it affected the ability to achieve and maintain hot shutdown following a control room fire. This finding is associated with the Mitigating Systems cornerstone and the respective attribute of protection against external factors (e.g., fire). This finding impacted the mitigating systems cornerstone objective to ensure the availability, reliability, and capability of systems that respond to external events (such as fire) to prevent undesirable consequences. It is the NRC's understanding that the licensee does not consider these circuit vulnerabilities to be violations of NRC requirements. The licensee considers multiple hot shorts due to fire in the control room to be outside of the plant licensing basis for the Fire Protection Program. Specifically, in this case, two hot shorts due to fire induced circuit damage would be required to prevent the scram of one rod group. The NRC staff and the industry are currently working on developing a resolution methodology to address these types of potential fire induced circuit failures. The team concluded that this violation meets the criteria of the NRC Enforcement Manual Section 8.1.7.1 for deferring enforcement actions for postulated fire induced circuit failures.

Inspection Report# : [2006008](#) (*pdf*)

Barrier Integrity

Emergency Preparedness

Occupational Radiation Safety

Significance:  Jun 27, 2009

Identified By: Self-Revealing

Item Type: NCV NonCited Violation

Failure to Barricade and Conspicuously Post a High Radiation Area

The inspectors reviewed a self-revealing finding for the failure of Energy Northwest to implement the standards and guidance provided in Site Wide Procedure SWP-CAP-01, "Corrective Action Program," Revision 17. Specifically, Energy Northwest failed to take prompt corrective action in response to Action Request 1485, dated September 2000, that identified the Cuno filter as a single point vulnerability, which could lead to a plant scram. Action Request 1485 recommended upgrading the type of filter in the seal oil system to a high efficiency duplex filter assembly. Due to a low priority ranking, corrective action was delayed several times. Action Request 1485-4, dated March 11, 2008, documented a scheduling error delaying the corrective action from fiscal year 2009 to fiscal year 2010 or 2011.

The finding was more than minor because it affected the Initiating Events Cornerstone objective to limit the likelihood of those events that upset plant stability and challenge critical safety functions during shutdown as well as power operations. Using Inspection Manual Chapter 0609.4, "Phase 1 – Initial Screening and Characterization of Findings," the finding was determined to be of very low safety significance (Green) because it did not contribute to both the likelihood of a reactor trip and the likelihood that mitigation equipment or functions will not be available. The finding had a crosscutting aspect in the area of problem identification and resolution associated with operating experience because the licensee failed to implement operational experience through changes to station processes, procedures, equipment, and training programs [P.2.(b)]

Inspection Report# : [2009003](#) (*pdf*)

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

Significance: SL-IV May 13, 2008

Identified By: NRC

Item Type: VIO Violation

Willful Violation by a project manager who instructed plant workers to reach across a contamination boundary without radiation protection approval

During an NRC investigation and subsequent in-office inspection completed on May 13, 2008, a violation of NRC requirements was identified. In accordance with the NRC Enforcement Policy, the violation is listed below:

Technical Specification 5.4.1.a states, that written procedures shall be established, implemented, and maintained covering the applicable procedures recommended in Regulatory Guide 1.33, Revision 2, Appendix A, February 1978. Regulatory Guide 1.33, Appendix A, Section 7.e (1), specifies procedures for "Access Control to Radiation Areas Including a Radiation Work Permit System."

Columbia Generating Station Procedure GEN-RPP-04, "Entry into, Conduct in, and Exit from Radiologically Controlled Areas," Revision 14, states, in part, "Do not reach over, or cross contaminated area boundaries without RP approval."

Contrary to the above, during repair of the HPCS-P-1 flange on June 16, 2007, a project manager instructed plant workers to reach across a contamination boundary without radiation protection approval.

This is a Severity Level IV violation. (Supplement IV)

Inspection Report# : [2008008](#) (*pdf*)

Last modified : December 10, 2009