

INFORMATION REPORT

September 11, 2003

SECY-03-0159

For: The Commissioners
From: William M. Dean, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO
Subject: SECY-03-0159 WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK
ENDING SEPTEMBER 5, 2003

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*No input this week.

/RA/

William M. Dean
Assistant for Operations, OEDO

Contact:
L. Roche, OEDO

Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Power Reductions at Byron 1 and 2 and Braidwood 2

On August 28, 2003, Exelon informed the NRC that it was reducing the power on Byron, Units 1 and 2 by 32 MWe and 22 MWe respectively. The decision was made following analysis of feedwater flow data derived from the Advanced Measurement and Analysis Group (AMAG) ultrasonic flow meters (UFMs) in use at Byron and Braidwood. The UFMs, which are marketed by Westinghouse, were used to adjust the feedwater flow rate indications from the venturi meters to compensate for possible venturi fouling during an operating cycle. The licensee reported that there were signal abnormalities from some of the UFMs and, on Byron 1, statistical differences between the total feedwater flow and the sum of the flows from the four individual feedwater lines. On September 1, 2003, the power at Braidwood, Unit 2 was reduced for similar reasons. The UFMs for the three units are out of service. There have been no abnormalities reported in feedwater flow measurement at Braidwood, Unit 1. It continues to operate with the UFMs in service. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is monitoring Exelon's investigation of the conditions at Byron and Braidwood and is investigating the generic aspects resulting from the recent UFM performance information.

Millstone Power Station, Unit No. 2

On December 12, 2002, the Connecticut Coalition Against Millstone (CCAM) and the Standing for Truth About Radiation (STAR) Foundation filed a petition to intervene and request for a hearing on a license amendment request that the licensee submitted to the NRC on September 26, 2002. The license amendment would revise the Technical Specifications to modify requirements regarding containment closure and spent fuel pool area ventilation during movement of irradiated fuel assemblies in containment and in the spent fuel pool area. The proposed changes take credit for re-analysis of the limiting design basis Fuel Handling Accidents using a selective implementation of the Alternative Source Term methodology in accordance with 10 CFR 50.67 and Regulatory Guide 1.183.

On February 14, 2003, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) issued a ruling finding that CCAM has standing to participate in the proceeding and that the STAR Foundation lacks standing. CCAM's contention stated that: "The amendment involves the potential of significant increase in the amounts of radiological effluents that may be released offsite and thus the amendment involves an adverse impact on the public health and safety." On August 18, 2003, the ASLB ruled that CCAM's contention is not sufficiently supported to be admissible under relevant rules and law. Therefore, the ASLB dismissed the contention and terminated the proceeding. On August 28, 2003, CCAM filed an appeal of the ASLB's decision with the Commission. The NRC staff is in the process of preparing a response to the CCAM appeal. The staff has not yet completed the review of the amendment request.

Meeting with General Electric Nuclear Fuels on Extended Power Uprates

On August 26, 2003, the NRC staff met with General Electric Nuclear Fuels (GNF) to discuss the specifics of the fuel-dependent safety analyses necessary to support extended power

updates (EPU) that involve transition cores, with mixed-vendor fuel designs. On June 25, 2003, the NRC transmitted a letter to GNF that was distributed to all boiling water reactor licensees, which outlined the analyses necessary to ensure that the staff's safety analyses supporting extended power uprate (EPU) applications provided sufficient bases to assess, (1) the core and fuel performance, (2) the available plant margins for all design bases and special events, and (3) the analytical methods, codes and licensing methodology. In the August 26, 2003, meeting, GNF agreed with the content and the position of the staff's letter. However, GNF expressed concern that submitting cycle-specific safety analyses may impact the EPU review and approval schedule. GNF proposed to provide safety analyses based on representative cores that are "close" to the cycle-specific core configuration and conditions.

The staff concluded that the GNF proposal would yield results that may neither be bounding nor simulate the neutronic and thermal-hydraulic response of the transition core. Therefore, the staff reiterated their position that since some of the EPU plants' safety margins may be small, the supporting safety analyses need to be either bounding or demonstrate the plant's response as it will be operated. Furthermore, the staff reaffirmed the position that it will schedule completion of power uprate reviews for 12 months following receipt of a complete application.

Summary of Public Meeting on Proposed Amendment to 10 CFR 50.55a

On August 25, 2003, representatives from the Division of Engineering held a public meeting in Scottsdale, AZ. The purpose of the public meeting was to obtain stakeholder feedback on the proposed rulemaking to amend 10 CFR 50.55a to incorporate by reference the 2001 Edition through 2003 Addenda of Sections III and XI, Division 1, of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code. These two sections of the Code provide requirements for the design and inservice inspection of nuclear power plant components. The public meeting was held in the evening at the same location that ASME Sections III and XI committees were meeting to enhance stakeholder participation. Approximately 60 members of the public attended the meeting, most were members of the ASME. There was a good exchange of information between the NRC staff and the public during the meeting. A senior ASME member stated that he hopes NRC will continue to conduct meetings to obtain stakeholder feedback on all future proposed rulemakings that amend 10 CFR 50.55a to incorporate by reference a later edition and addenda of the ASME Code.

Summary of ASME Code Meetings on Design and Inservice Inspection

During the week of August 25, NRC staff from the Division of Engineering participated in ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code meetings in Scottsdale, AZ. The NRC staff attended a variety of ASME Code committees covering Code requirements for the design of nuclear power plant components (ASME Code, Section III) and inservice inspection rules (ASME Code, Section XI). The scope included a broad range of topics including flaw evaluation, weld repair processes, boric acid degradation, ultrasonic examination methods, risk-informed initiatives, environmental fatigue, and component design issues.

The Task Group (TG) on Boric Acid Corrosion discussed current Code requirements related to the visual (VT-2) examinations associated with pressure tests of borated water systems. These examinations are currently conducted (with some exceptions) with insulation in place. The TG

is developing new Code language that will require direct (i.e., bare metal) examination of all dissimilar metal welds. The frequency of such inspections is under discussion. Performing direct VT-2 examinations would assist in the early identification of through-wall leakage in borated water systems, which can also assist in mitigating any consequent boric acid corrosion of ferritic materials exposed to such through-wall leakage.

Public Meeting on the Draft 10 CFR Part 52 Construction Inspection Program Framework Document

On August 27, 2003, the staff conducted a meeting to solicit comments from the public on the Draft 10 CFR Part 52 Construction Inspection Program (CIP) Framework Document. The draft CIP framework document describes the construction inspection program planned for future reactors, which will be built under the 10 CFR Part 52 process. Approximately 65 people attended the meeting, including representatives of Pennsylvania state government, Entergy, Exelon, Southern Nuclear, Nuclear Energy Institute, Westinghouse, Bechtel, Toshiba, news media, and members of the public. The staff received several comments and questions on the document, which the staff agreed to resolve before issuing the final CIP framework document. The framework document was issued for public comment in May of 2003 and the public comment period on the document ends on September 15, 2003.

September 5, 2003

ENCLOSURE A

Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

NMSS/Regional Division Directors' Counterpart Meeting

To enhance communications between the Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS) and the Regions, Division Directors from NMSS met, at NRC Headquarters, with their counterparts from the regional Divisions of Nuclear Materials Safety on August 27-28, 2003. These managers are responsible for nuclear materials, fuel cycle safety and safeguards, waste and decommissioning, and spent fuel and transportation activities. The meeting discussed security issues for NMSS and Agreement State licensees, the NRC Strategic Plan, NMSS and regional FY 2004 Operating Plan issues, training issues, and various program status updates, for a number of activities across the materials and waste arenas. Approximately 60 managers, supervisors, and senior staff participated in the meeting. Representatives from the Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response, the Office of Human Resources, and the Office of State and Tribal Programs also participated. This was the second of two Division Director counterpart meetings held this year. The next meeting is tentatively planned to take place in February 2004.

Louisiana Energy Services Selects Site in New Mexico for Enrichment Plant

On September 2, 2003, Louisiana Energy Services (LES) announced its selection of a site 5 miles east of Eunice, New Mexico (near Hobbs, New Mexico) for its planned uranium enrichment plant. Senators Domenici and Bingaman, Governor Richardson, and U.S. Representative Pearce attended the announcement ceremony. LES plans to submit its license application at the end of this calendar year.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Meeting on Possible Examination of Damaged Paks Fuel

On April 10, 2003, 30 fuel assemblies were being cleaned to remove a crud buildup at the Paks-2 nuclear power plant in Hungary. Inadequate coolant circulation within the cleaning tank caused severe damage to the fuel. Because of possible insights that might be gained from this event, an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) coordinated project is being considered to examine the damaged fuel. RES staff participated in meetings in Budapest on August 21-22, 2003, to discuss this potential project. Detailed presentations were made on the visual (video) examinations and analyses that have been performed to date. The Russian fuel manufacturer, TVEL, had just been awarded the contract for removal of the damaged fuel, and they were also present at the meeting. There was agreement in principle by all parties to cooperate, and a written proposal will now be prepared by OECD staff. Actual recovery work could start in about six months, so any planning for a fuel examination will have to be completed in that time period.

Publication of NUREG/CR-6832, Regulatory Effectiveness of Unresolved Safety Issue A-45, "Shutdown Decay Heat Removal Requirements"

The subject report provides the technical basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the USI A-45 resolution. The report utilized information from licensees' individual plant examinations (IPEs) and individual plant examinations of external events (IPEEEs) to assess the outcome of the resolution process. The report concluded that licensees' IPE and IPEEE programs used to resolve USI A-45, generally met expectations without the imposition of generic hardware fixes to improve their plant's decay heat removal reliability (DHR). Certain limitations, however, need to be considered in putting this conclusion into perspective. In many cases, licensees took credit for alternate DHR strategies not required by NRC regulations. These strategies include, for example, feed and bleed operation for pressurized-water reactors, use of the firewater system or other sources of water and equipment to remove decay heat, use of system cross-ties between units or trains, and use of a hardened wetwell containment vent for BWRs. Credit for these strategies can in certain cases substantially reduce core damage frequency through the introduction of diversity in the DHR function. The NUREG/CR report is available on the NRC website at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/contract/cr6832/>.

Nuclear Security and Incident Response
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-II-03-16, Tennessee Valley Authority - ALERT DECLARED AT SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT.
2. PNO-II-03-16A, Tennessee Valley Authority - UPDATE ON ALERT AT SEQUOYAH NUCLEAR PLANT.
3. PNO-II-03-016B, Tennessee Valley Authority - UPDATE ON ALERT AT SEQUOYAH UNIT 1 - AIT DOWNGRADED TO A SPECIAL INSPECTION.
4. PNO-II-03-17, Southern Nuclear Company - SHUTDOWN TO INVESTIGATE AND REPAIR REACTOR VESSEL HEAD LEAK.

Chief Information Officer
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Results of ADAMS Support Center Customer Survey

Part of the ADAMS Support Team (AST) Values Action Plan to improve the Quality of Service was to survey customers who use the services of the ADAMS Support Center regarding the quality of service they have received. The survey was completed on August 29, 2003, and the results show that the ADAMS Support Center is currently providing a very high level of quality service and are highly regarded by the NRC staff who use their services.

Disposition of Commissioner Dicus' Records

A review team required by NRC Management Directive (MD) Handbook 3.53, Part IV, "Procedures for Managing Records and Papers of Commissioners," held its first meeting with Commissioner Dicus' office staff on September 3, 2003, to discuss the disposition of Commissioner Dicus' records and personal papers. Commissioner Dicus' term ended June 30, 2003. The office staff has completed its initial review to segregate the material as required by MD 3.53 and is now ready for the review team to conduct its review. Commissioner Dicus has decided to donate her personal papers to the Clinton Presidential Library, a government facility under the National Archives and Records Administration. OCIO will conduct its records management review by September 30, 2003.

GroupWise 6 Upgrade Underway

OCIO has completed the first step to upgrade the agency's email system. The upgrade of an email administrative server took place on Friday August 29th and proceeded without incident or deviation from the plan. OCIO plans to begin agency wide upgrade in November.

Upgrade to Agency Internet Access Path

OCIO, in conjunction with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), began Phase I of the upgrade to the agency's Internet access path from 10 Mbps to 100 Mbps. Phase I was completed over the Labor Day Weekend and involved changing the physical circuit between NRC and NIH (which was copper based) to fiber optics. Phase II of the upgrade, which will provide full 100 Mbps capability to agency workstations, is planned for later this year.

Freedom of Information and Privacy Act Requests received during the period of August 31 through September 4, 2003:

Specific records re: Operation Technology Inc. and Nuclear Management Company & named individual	FOIA/PA-2003-0410
FY2002 Accountability Report	FOIA/PA-2003-0411
Linde Gases, Union Carbide, 350 Avenue P, Newark NJ, License #29-28350-01	FOIA/PA-2003-0412
Nuclear Material Events Database	FOIA/PA-2003-0413
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, transcripts of named individuals re: alleged discrimination	FOIA/PA-2003-0414
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, transcripts of named individuals re: alleged discrimination	FOIA/PA-2003-0415
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, transcripts of named individuals re: alleged discrimination	FOIA/PA-2003-0416
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, transcripts of named individuals re: alleged discrimination	FOIA/PA-2003-0417
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, transcripts of named individuals re: alleged discrimination	FOIA/PA-2003-0418
Gulf Nuclear of Louisiana, Inc., records of worker exposure in the investigation & cleanup; incident reports re: radiation exposure or releases of radioactive materials	FOIA/PA-2003-0419
Employment applications for Resident Inspector & Reactor Safety Engineer for named individual, all records re: interviews and reference development	FOIA/PA-2003-0420
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, transcripts of named individuals re: alleged discrimination	FOIA/PA-2003-0421

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ENCLOSURE G

Office of Human Resources
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending September 5, 2003

Arrivals		
ANSTINE, Scott	INFORMATION MGMT ANALYST	OCIO
ATWATER, Scott P.	HEALTH PHYSICIST	RIV
BAKER, Randal	REACTOR ENGINEER	RIII
BASSETT, Kimberly	SENIOR BUDGET ANALYST	OCFO
CASTO, Greg	EP SPECIALIST	NRR
HACKETT, Gregory	EMERGENCY RESPONSE COORDINATOR	NSIR
MINTZ, Todd	NUCLEAR SAFETY INTERN	RES
MORRIS, George	SR. ELECTRICAL ENGINEER	NRR
NORFLEET, Janita	PURCHASING ASSISTANT	RI
RUPINTA, Shane	IT SPECIALIST (sysadmin)	OCIO
SCHMITT, Ronald	HEALTH PHYSICIST	NRR
SMITH, Stacy	STUDENT ENGINEER	RI
SMITH, Tyson	LEGAL INTERN	OGC
Departures		
HUGHS, Anita	CONTRACTS SPECIALIST	ADM
NGUYEN, Kim-Lien	STUDENT IT SPECIALIST	OCIO
SILLER, Amy	CONTRACTS SPECIALIST	ADM
YU, Chong	STUDENT IT SPECIALIST	OCIO

Office of Public Affairs
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Media Interest

U.S.-Canadian efforts to determine the cause of the August 14 blackout, including congressional hearings and NRC's participation in a joint task force and its working group on nuclear issues.

NRC's alert to nuclear power plants that their computer networks may be vulnerable to intrusion by computer worms.

NRC security enhancements on the approach of the second anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

On September 3, 2003, OPA participated in a DHS table-top exercise with other Federal public affairs officers.

Press Releases	
Headquarters:	
03-108	NRC Issues Information Notice On Potential Of Nuclear Power Plant Network To Worm Infection (9/2)
03-109	NRC Issues Mid-Cycle Assessments For All Nuclear Plants (9/2)
03-110	Note to Editors: NRC Progress in Supporting Homeland Protection And Preparedness (9/3)
03-111	NRC Judge To Hear Oral Arguments Of Counsel in Allentown, Pa., On CFC Logistics Irradiator (9/3)
03-112	NRC Issues Bulletin On Potentially Defective Valves Manufactured By Hunt Valve Company (9/4)
03-113	NRC Advisory Committee On Nuclear Waste To Meet September 16 - 18 In Rockville, Maryland (9/5)
Regions:	
I-03-052	NRC Assigns New Senior Resident Inspector To Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Plant (9/5)
II-03-043	NRC To Present Preliminary Inspection Results For Sequoyah Nuclear Plant Shutdown At Public Meeting On September 4 (9/3)
III-03-060	NRC Davis-Besse Oversight Panel To Meet Sept. 10 In Oak Harbor, OH. (9/5)

Office of the Secretary
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Information Papers		
1. SECY-03-0152	8/29/03	SECY-03-0152 Weekly Information Report - Week Ending August 22, 2003

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Tom Ridge, Secretary of Homeland Security, et al., dated August 29, 2003, provides update on steps taken to enhance security at licensed nuclear facilities and of radioactive material.
2. Letter to Larry Barrett, California Department of Health Services, dated August 27, 2003, concerns the importance of securing radioactive materials.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste - Notice of Meeting.
2. Peer Review Committee for Source Term Modeling - Notice of Public Meeting.

Region I
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Joint Meeting of Federal and State Regulators Regarding the Safety Light Corporation Site

The Safety Light Corporation (SLC) site located near Bloomsburg, PA, is listed on NRC's Site Decommissioning Management Plan (SDMP). On September 3, 2003, the Region I Division of Nuclear Materials Safety hosted a meeting of Federal and state regulators involved with ongoing site cleanup actions. Attending were representatives from the NRC Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards and Office of the General Counsel, as well as representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, Region III; Army Corps of Engineers; and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss near-term actions to be taken when SLC submits a completed characterization report in late September 2003 for the re-sorted waste that was removed from two underground silos in 1999-2000. An action plan was developed and agreed to by all meeting participants.

September 5, 2003

ENCLOSURE P

Region II
Items of Interest
Week Ending September 5, 2003

Caribe Medical Plaza - Closed Predecisional Enforcement Conference

On September 4, 2003, the Regional Administrator, the Director, Division of Nuclear Materials Safety, and other Regional managers attended a closed Predecisional Enforcement Conference with Caribe Medical Plaza in Dorado, Puerto Rico. The purpose of the conference was to discuss multiple apparent willful violations involving the failure to perform licensed activities in accordance with approved procedures and regulatory requirements.

Tennessee Valley Authority- Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant Management Meeting

On September 2, 2003, representatives from Tennessee Valley Authority were in the regional office to attend a management meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss Browns Ferry's operating performance for Units 2 and 3.

Tennessee Valley Authority - Sequoyah Nuclear Plant Exit Meeting

On September 4, 2003, the Acting Director, Division of Reactor Projects, participated in a public exit meeting at Sequoyah Unit 1 to discuss the results of the augmented inspection team that was reclassified as a special inspection. Two members of the press attended the exit meeting. The team concluded that plant systems responded as designed and expected, although an incorrectly isolated turbine control pressure switch was the cause of the trip.

Office of Congressional Affairs
 Items of Interest
 Week Ending September 5, 2003

CONGRESSIONAL HEARING SCHEDULE, NO. 29

OCA Contact	DATE & PLACE	TIME	WITNESS	SUBJECT	COMMITTEE
Gerke	09/10/03 SD-342	9:00	DOE, FERC, Independent System Operators	Blackout 2003: The Federal Role and Response	Senators Voinovich/Durbin Gov't Mgmt, Fedl Wrkfrce & DC Governmental Affairs
Keeling	09/10/03 2118 RHOB	10:00	Staff Director of Joint Intelligence Committee; Governor Gilmore	Findings of 9/11 Intelligence Report	Reps. Cox/Turner Select Homeland Security
Gerke	09/10/03 2154 RHOB	10:00	GAO, DHS, OMB, DOJ, Private Sector	Protecting Information Systems from Computer Viruses	Reps. Putnam/Clay Tech & Info Policy, Intgov Relations Government Reform
Combs	09/11/03 2123 RHOB	10:00	Chairman Diaz, DOE, Bechtel, NEI	Review of the Progress of DOE's Yucca Mountain Project	Reps. Barton/Boucher Energy and Air Quality Energy and Commerce
Keeling	09/17/03 TBA <i>Tentative</i>	TBA	TBA	Implications of the Electric Power Blackout	Reps. Camp/Sanchez Infrastructure & Border Security Reps. Thornberry/Lofgren Cybersecurity, Science, R&D Select Homeland Security
Keeling	09/30/03 2322 RHOB	2:00	TBA <i>Hearing May Be Closed</i>	Nuclear Terrorism Prevention: Fedl Govt's Progress Toward Installing Radiation Detection Monitors at U.S. Ports & Borders	Reps. Greenwood/Deutsch Oversight and Investigations Energy and Commerce

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ENCLOSURE R