



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS -- REGION I
475 Allendale Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406

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CONTACT: Diane Screnci (610)337-5330/ e-mail: dps@nrc.gov
Neil A. Sheehan (610)337-5331/e-mail: nas@nrc.gov

NOTE TO EDITORS: NRC STAFF ISSUES "ASSESSMENT FOLLOW-UP LETTER" TO IP2

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued the attached letter to Consolidated Edison Company of New York detailing the agency's plans for supplementing inspections at the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant in Buchanan, N.Y. Plant performance data collected over the past year have indicated degraded performance in several areas. This letter summarizes the NRC's plans for overseeing performance improvement efforts at IP2.

In developing these plans, the NRC considered information provided by Con Ed in a September 11 management meeting held to address issues associated with the unit's designation as an "agency-focus" plant. NRC plans are also based on guidelines established in the new Reactor Oversight Process, which the NRC began to implement in April of this year.

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att: as stated

October 10, 2000

Mr. John Groth
Senior Vice President - Nuclear Operations
Consolidated Edison Company of
New York, Inc.
Indian Point 2 Station
Broadway and Bleakley Avenue
Buchanan, NY 10511

SUBJECT: Assessment Follow Up Letter - Indian Point Unit 2

Dear Mr. Groth:

This letter summarizes our plans for overseeing performance improvement efforts at Indian Point Unit 2. In developing these plans, we considered information you provided in the September 11, 2000 management meeting held to address issues associated with the unit's designation as an "agency-focus" plant. Our plans are also based on guidelines established in the new Reactor Oversight Process (ROP), which NRC began to implement in April of this year. The specific nature and level of our planned oversight activities have been determined through use of the significance determination process and "Action Matrix" guidelines (Attachment 1) of the new ROP.

Plant performance data collected over the past year indicate that several cornerstones in the NRC regulatory framework are degraded at the IP2 facility. These degraded cornerstones are associated principally with the performance problems revealed during an August 1999 reactor trip with electrical distribution system complications and a February 2000 steam generator tube failure. Following the multiple degraded cornerstones column of the Action Matrix, we will conduct a number of activities above NRC baseline oversight. These include monitoring your performance improvement plan and performing an independent team inspection (supplemental Inspection Procedure 95003) to review and assess the underlying causes for the degraded cornerstone.

In addition to planned inspections, we expect to monitor implementation of your improvement plan through periodic management meetings which will be open for public observation. One such meeting (as previously discussed with Mr. John McCann of your staff) has been scheduled in the NRC Region I office for October 25, 2000. This meeting will focus specifically on the area of engineering support and safety system readiness. We note, in this regard, that an important aspect of the 95003 supplemental inspection is a comprehensive review of system design, configuration control and equipment performance.

Attachments 2, 3, and 4 provide additional details regarding the implementation of the reactor oversight program at IP2. In accordance with the NRC Action Matrix, additional

agency actions are possible (e.g. Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL), Demand for Information (DFI), Order) for a plant with multiple degraded cornerstones. We have and continue to evaluate these actions as they might be appropriate for the IP2 situation; the ROP requires these actions be reconsidered following completion of the 95003 inspection.

Finally, we have concluded that the escalated level of oversight determined under Action Matrix guidelines for a plant with multiple degraded cornerstones is fully consistent with the heightened oversight contemplated by Senior Managers in designating IP2 an "agency focus" plant under transitional criteria used prior to ROP implementation. We will no longer use the "agency focus" designation at IP2 that was established for interim use during the transitional period leading up to implementation of the new ROP.

The Plant performance indicators and current inspection findings can be reviewed at the following NRC website: <http://www.nrc.gov/NRR/OVERSIGHT/ASSESS/index.html>
In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Our current inspection plan for IP2 is contained in Attachment 5. If circumstances arise which cause us to modify our plans, we will notify you as soon as possible. Please contact Peter Eselgroth at 610-337-5234 with any questions you may have regarding this letter or the inspection plan.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Hubert J. Miller
Regional Administrator

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Attachments:

1. NRC Action Matrix
2. Revised Reactor Oversight Program (ROP) Implementation at IP2
3. IP2 Performance Summary (Inputs to NRC Action Matrix)
4. IP2 Performance Details (Inputs to NRC Action Matrix)
5. NRC Inspection Plans