



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-8064**

February 15, 2000

Harold B. Ray, Executive Vice President
Southern California Edison Co.
San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station
P.O. Box 128
San Clemente, California 92674-0128

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR SAFETY CONCERNS PROGRAM UPDATE

Dear Mr. Ray:

This refers to the meeting conducted in the Region IV office on February 3, 2000. This meeting related to discussions of the status and effectiveness of your onsite Nuclear Safety Concerns Program for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), Units 1, 2, and 3 facility. This meeting was conducted at your request. Prior to the meeting, we reviewed our allegation data to identify areas that potentially needed additional attention by your staff. The information that was presented correlated closely with our review, indicating a common understanding of the problems that you face.

In 1999, the number of allegations that originated onsite at SONGS exceeded three times the median number of allegations for the industry. As a result, SONGS met the criteria for additional review by the NRC. In our annual allegation status report,¹ we concluded overall that neither the trend nor the content of the allegations indicated an unhealthy work environment at SONGS. Our latest review was consistent with that finding. Approximately one third of the allegations identified in 1999 were referred to your staff for resolution. Overall, your responses were satisfactory. In addition, 100 percent of the allegations, which were substantiated in 1999, were appropriately included in your corrective action program before you received information from us about the concern. We also noted that, while allegation rates were significantly higher during the 1995, 1996, and 1997 outages, the allegation rate did not rise during the 1999 outages, indicating that some of your past corrective actions have been effective.

During the meeting, we discussed, in some detail, the possible underlying causes for the continuing high allegation rate at SONGS. During the discussion, your staff agreed that understanding the underlying cause or causes for allegations was important. We noted that you planned some additional review to assure yourself that some underlying cause for the continuing high number of allegations has not been overlooked.

In closing, we found the information provided to be informative and useful. We appreciate the time and effort of you staff that was needed to make this presentation.

¹"Status of Allegation Program, Fiscal Year 1999, Annual Report," December 22, 1999, Accession No. ML993620572

In accordance with Section 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," Part 2, Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, a copy of this letter will be placed in the NRC's Public Document Room.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, we will be pleased to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Ken E. Brockman, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos.: 50-361
50-362
License Nos.: NPF-10
NPF-15

Enclosures:

1. Attendance List
2. Licensee Presentation

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E-Mail notification of issuance of all documents to Nancy Holbrook (NBH).

bcc to DCD (IE45)

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RITS Coordinator
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| 2/14/00 /RA/ | 2/14/00 /RA/ | 2/15/00 (GFS) | 2/15/00 /RA/ | |

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ENCLOSURE 1

Attendance List

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Dwight Nunn, Vice President Engineering and Technical Support
Ed Scherer, Manager, Regulatory Affairs
Willis Frick, Manager, Nuclear Safety Concerns Program

NRC

Ellis Merschoff, Regional Administrator
Elmo Collins, Deputy Director, Division of Reactor Projects (DRP)
Russ Wise, Senior Allegations Coordinator
Linda Smith, Chief, Project Branch E, DRP
Jim Melfi, Project Engineer, Project Branch E, DRP
Larry Ricketson, Senior Radiation Specialist, DRS
Tom McKernon, Senior Reactor Examiner, DRS