

February 24, 2000

EA 2000-024

Mr. Samuel L. Newton
Vice President, Operations
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
185 Old Ferry Road
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

SUBJECT: INSPECTION REPORT 05000271/1999012 (REPLY)

Dear Mr. Newton:

This letter responds to your correspondence dated September 29, 1999 and November 23, 1999 and documents the meeting conducted on October 26, 1999 in the NRC Region I office.

Thank you for informing us of the corrective and preventive actions documented in your November letter and for your discussions in a meeting and conference call on the subject. The corrective actions and other enhancements described in your correspondence will be examined during a future inspection of your licensed program.

The slides you presented at the meeting are enclosed. At the meeting we agreed to review and validate our answers on two "frequently asked questions" during the next maintenance rule webpage meeting. We expect to complete this review in the near future. As we have noted in the inspection report and at the meeting on October 26, 1999, unavailability and reliability of high risk significant systems need to be monitored against established performance criteria, if the system's function is required for a specific mode of operation.

You asked us to reconsider the cited violation involving the failure to monitor unavailability of specific systems during the refueling outage. In so doing that, my staff, led by Mr. R. Conte, conducted a conference call on January 26, 2000 with Mr. R. Wanczyk and other members of your staff. In that call, we determined that the performance criteria used for evaluation of the balance between reliability and availability during an outage condition was not established until after the outage while the evaluation was occurring. Accordingly, we determined that the violation occurred as stated in the Notice.

Samuel L. Newton

-2-

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. No response is required to this letter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Wayne D. Lanning, Director
Division of Reactor Safety

Docket No. 05000271

Enclosure: Vermont Yankee Slides on Maintenance Rule 10 CFR 50.65

cc:

R. McCullough, Operating Experience Coordinator - Vermont Yankee
G. Sen, Licensing Manager, Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
D. Rapaport, Director, Vermont Public Interest Research Group, Inc.
D. Tefft, Administrator, Bureau of Radiological Health, State of New Hampshire
Chief, Safety Unit, Office of the Attorney General, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
D. Lewis, Esquire
G. Bisbee, Esquire
J. Block, Esquire
T. Rapone, Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety
D. Katz, Citizens Awareness Network (CAN)
M. Daley, New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution, Inc. (NECNP)
State of New Hampshire, SLO Designee
State of Vermont, SLO Designee
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, SLO Designee

Samuel L. Newton

-3-

Distribution w/encl:

Region I Docket Room (with concurrences)

PUBLIC

Nuclear Safety Information Center (NSIC)

NRC Resident Inspector

C. Anderson, DRP

R. Summers, DRP

R. Junod, DRP

W. Lanning, DRS

B. Holian, DRS

R. Conte, DRS

J. Williams, DRS

DRS File

J. Johnson, NRR

B. Sheron, NRR

R. Borchardt, OE

D. Dambly, OGC

D. Holody, ORA

T. Walker, ORA

G. Matakas, ORA

M. J. Campion, ORA

J. Shea, RI EDO Coordinator

E. Adensam, NRR

R. Croteau, NRR

W. Scott, NRR

D. Screnci, PAO

Inspection Program Branch, NRR (IPAS)

DOCDESK

DOCUMENT NAME: G:\HPEPB\WILLIAMS\VY9912REPLYLTR.WPD

To receive a copy of this document, indicate in the box: "C" = Copy without attachment/enclosure "E" = Copy with attachment/enclosure "N" = No copy

| OFFICE | RI/DRS | RI/DRP | RI/ORA | RI/DRS | RI/DRS |
|--------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| NAME | JWilliams | CAnderson | TWalker | RConte | WLanning |
| DATE | 01/26/00 | 01/26/00 | 02/08/00 | 02/16/00 | 02/24/00 |

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY