

March 31, 2000

At 7:17 pm EST on February 15, 2000, with the unit at 99% power, the operators of the Indian Point 2 nuclear power plant (a 4-loop, Westinghouse, pressurized-water reactor) received a nitrogen-16 alarm which is indicative of a steam generator tube failure. The licensee subsequently declared an "Alert" in accordance with procedures. The operators manually tripped the reactor at which time all rods fully inserted into the core. The operators isolated the faulted steam generator and proceeded to use the three intact steam generators to cool the reactor. Once reactor coolant system pressure was below 350 psig, the licensee continued to cool the reactor using the residual heat removal system. The licensee terminated the "Alert" after reactor coolant system temperature was reduced to below 200 degrees F.

In response to the event, the licensee dispatched environmental monitoring teams which did not identify any radiation levels above background. NRC Region I dispatched a health physics inspector to the site to evaluate the licensee's environmental monitoring activities. The NRC staffed the incident response center in the Region I office and the Headquarters Operations Center.

On February 18, 2000, Region I dispatched an Augmented Inspection Team (AIT) to review the event. The multi-disciplinary team of region-based inspectors have focused on the licensee's response to the leak and have gathered information regarding the licensee's actions to meet their steam generator inspection and maintenance commitments. The Office of Research (RES) has been tasked to provide an independent review of the safety evaluation basis for License Amendment 201 which allowed a one-time extension of the steam generator inspection cycle. Concurrently, the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR) will undertake a review of the steam generator tube history at Indian Point Unit 2. This review will include an evaluation of decisions made during the last operating cycle.