

June 3, 2008

EA-08-148

Mr. Britt T. McKinney
Senior Vice-President & Chief Nuclear Officer
PPL Susquehanna, LLC
769 Salem Blvd. - NUCSB3
Berwick, PA 18603-0467

SUBJECT: SUSQUEHANNA STEAM ELECTRIC STATION - NRC INVESTIGATION
REPORT NO. 1-2007-027

Dear Mr. McKinney:

This refers to the investigation conducted by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Office of Investigations (OI) from April 26, 2007 to January 30, 2008, at your Susquehanna Steam Electric Station (Susquehanna). The investigation was initiated after you informed the NRC on April 7, 2007, that contract carpenters had removed a Unit 2 high radiation area barrier and posting without approval of the Health Physics (HP) department on April 6, 2007, in an area where dose rates were up to 200 mRem per hour.

As a result of the OI investigation, the NRC confirmed the results of your independent investigation that the contract carpenters had removed the barrier and posting without approval or knowledge of the HP department. The OI investigation also found that one of the carpenters deliberately took action that resulted in the removal of the barrier. Specifically, the carpenter intentionally unscrewed the clip holding the chain to the top of one of the stanchions and removed the chain and the postings. The NRC concluded that the carpenter acted willfully and that the deliberate action caused Susquehanna to be in violation of Technical Specification 5.7.1, "High Radiation Areas," of Facility Operating License NPF-22, which requires that each entry into such an area be barricaded and conspicuously posted as a high radiation area.

Based on the evidence developed during this investigation, the NRC has determined that this violation is appropriately categorized at Severity Level (SL) IV. In making this determination, the NRC considered that the potential for workers to receive an over-exposure during the short duration the high radiation area was unbarricaded was low. The NRC also considered whether the severity level should have been increased, given the willful nature of the violation, but determined not to escalate the severity, given that: (1) the violation involved the acts of a non-supervisory individual in your organization; (2) the significance of the underlying violation was low; and, (3) there was no tangible benefit to be gained from having been responsible for causing the violation. Therefore, the severity is appropriately categorized at SLIV.

This SL IV violation is not being cited because the issue was previously dispositioned as a licensee-identified violation of Technical Specification 5.7.1 of very low significance (Green) in the Susquehanna integrated inspection report 2007-003, issued July 24, 2007 (ML072070055).

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and your response, if you choose to provide one, will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the NRC's document system (ADAMS) accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. To the extent possible, your response, if you choose to provide one, should not include any personal privacy, proprietary, or safeguards information so that it can be made available to the public without redaction.

Sincerely,

/RA/

David C. Lew, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No. 50-388
License No. NPF-22

Enclosure: Factual Summary

cc w/encl:

C. Gannon, Vice President, Nuclear Operations
R. Paley, General Manager, Plant Support
R. Pagodin, General Manager, Nuclear Engineering
R. Sgarro, Manager, Nuclear Regulatory Affairs
R. Smith, General Manager, Site Preparedness and Services
M. Crowthers, Supervising Engineer, Nuclear Regulatory Affairs
R. Peal, Mgr, Training, Susquehanna
M. Rose, Manager, Quality Assurance
J. Scopelliti, Community Relations Manager, Susquehanna
B. Snapp, Esq., Associate General Counsel, PPL Services Corporation
Supervisor, Document Control Services
R. Osborne, Allegheny Electric Cooperative, Inc.
D. Allard, Dir, PA Dept of Environmental Protection
Board of Supervisors, Salem Township
J. Johnsrud, National Energy Committee, Sierra Club
E. Epstein, TMI-Alert (TMIA)
J. Powers, Dir, PA Office of Homeland Security
R. French, Dir, PA Emergency Management Agency

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Sincerely,
/RA/
David C. Lew
Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No. 50-388
License No. NPF-22

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