

July 3, 1997

Mr. Donald Reid
Senior Vice President, Operations
Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation
RD 5, Box 169
Ferry Road
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT 50-271/97-04 AND NOTICE OF VIOLATION

Dear Mr. Reid:

On May 31, 1997, the NRC completed an inspection at your Vermont Yankee reactor facility. The enclosed report presents the results of that inspection. Also, a meeting was held in Region I on May 15, 1997 to discuss your performance improvement plans in the engineering area. The discussion materials are enclosed with this report.

During the six week period covered by this inspection report, your conduct of activities at the Vermont Yankee facility was generally characterized by sound engineering and maintenance practices, and careful radiological work controls. During this period a region-based inspection of your security program concluded that the program was implemented effectively. Your decision to shut down to repair the main steam bypass valve steam leak, rather than to make further attempts at on-line temporary repair, indicated a conservative approach to plant operations.

However, we are concerned about a personnel performance problem that resulted in the reactor scram on April 24, 1997. Specifically, a failure to adhere to a surveillance procedure caused the scram. This failure to adhere to station procedures is a violation of section 6.5 of the facility Technical Specifications. In addition, the NRC identified other operator performance issues during this period. Your continued strong management attention to personnel performance is warranted.

The violation is cited in the enclosed Notice of Violation, and the circumstances surrounding the violation are described in detail in the enclosed report. Please note that you are required to respond to this letter and should follow the instructions specified in the enclosed Notice when preparing your response. In your response, please address whether the performance problems identified are indicative of a negative trend in overall performance and any plans you have to address any trend identified. The NRC will use your response, in part, to determine whether further enforcement action is necessary to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

IEDD
1/1

9707110307 970703
PDR ADOCK 05000271
G PDR



Donald A. Reid

2

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practices," a copy of this letter and the enclosed Notice will be placed in the NRC Public Document Room.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Curtis J. Cowgill, III, Chief
Projects Branch 5
Division of Reactor Projects

Enclosures:

1. Notice of Violation
2. NRC Inspection Report 50-271/97-04
3. May 15, 1997 Management Meeting Slides

Docket No. 50-271

cc w/encl:

G. Maret, Plant Manager

R. McCullough, Operating Experience Coordinator

J. Duffy, Licensing Engineer, Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation

J. Gilroy, 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 of Shaw, Pittman, Potts & Trowbridge

G. Bisbee, Esquire

R. Sedano, Vermont Department of Public Service

T. Rapone, Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety

State of New Hampshire, SLO Designee

State of Vermont, SLO Designee

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, SLO Designee

Distribution w/encl:

- Region I Docket Room (with concurrences)
- PUBLIC
- Nuclear Safety Information Center (NSIC)
- C. Cowgill, DRP
- R. Summers, DRP
- G. Morris, DRS
- D. Bearde, DRP
- W. Axelson, DRA

Distribution w/encl (VIA E-MAIL):

- DOCDESK
- D. Screnci, PA
- NRC Resident Inspector
- W. Dean, OEDO
- K. Jabbour, NRR
- P. Milano, NRR
- Inspection Program Branch, NRR (IPAS)
- R. Correia, NRR (RPC)
- R. Frahm, Jr., NRR (RKF)
- L. Cunningham, NRR (For Security/Safeguards Inspection Reports)
- D. Barss, NRR (For Emergency Plan Inspection Reports)

DOCUMENT NAME: g:\branch5\ir9704r1.vy

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/DRP <i>WAC</i>	RI/DRP <i>WAC</i>					
NAME	WACOOK/db	CJCOWGILL					
DATE	07/2/97	07/2/97	07/ /97	07/ /97	07/ /97	07/ /97	

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY