

APR 26 1989

Docket Nos. 50-289; 50-320

MEMORANDUM FOR: Jacque P. Durr, Acting Chief, Projects Branch No. 1,
Division of Reactor Projects

FROM: Curtis J. Cowgill, Chief, Reactor Projects Section 1A

SUBJECT: TMI STATUS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD MARCH 19 - APRIL 15, 1989

Enclosed is the TMI Resident Office monthly status report, which covers both TMI-1 and TMI-2. This report is to provide NRC management and the public with highlights of significant events at TMI-1 and TMI-2 from an NRC regulatory perspective.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

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for
Curtis J. Cowgill, Chief
Reactor Projects Section 1A

Enclosure: As Stated

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Jacque P. Durr

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ENCLOSURE

TMI-1 AND TMI-2 STATUS REPORT FOR THE PERIOD
MARCH 19 - APRIL 15, 1989

1. TMI-1

a. Facility Operations Summary

During the report period, the licensee operated the plant at nearly full power. A brief power reduction from 100% to about 80% occurred for about one hour on April 2, 1989 as the result of a failure of a heater drain pump. No challenges to plant safety systems occurred during this period.

b. Items of Special Interest

Heater Drain Pump Failure

On Sunday, April 2, 1989, the bearing assembly on one of two operating heater drain pumps failed resulting in a shearing of the pump shaft and damage to the pump casing and motor shaft. When the pump failed, power was reduced until a standby heater drain pump was placed on line. Subsequently, full power operations were resumed a short time later.

SALP Management Meeting

On April 10, 1989, the NRC staff met with GPU Nuclear management to discuss the results of the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) Report (50-239/87-99). The SALP report documented the results of the NRC Region I SALP Board that met on March 2, 1989, to assess the overall performance of Unit 1 for the period November 1, 1987 through January 15, 1989.

2. TMI-2

a. Facility Activities Summary

On Friday, March 31, 1989, defueling crews completed cutting the central portion of the Elliptical Flow Distributor (EFD) into 26 pieces. Eventual removal of these pieces will provide access to remove core debris from the reactor vessel's lower head.

A piece of the EFD was lifted to examine the condition of three in-core instrument guide tubes underneath. Of the three tubes, two were melted and one was intact. Examinations will continue to be made of other core internals and vessel material to assess how well they withstood conditions during the accident.

Following cutting of the EFD, a series of vertical cuts were made in the core baffle plates to facilitate their removal. Before the baffle plates are taken out, the pieces of the EFD will be lifted out, then the debris at the bottom of the reactor vessel will be removed. After this rubble is removed, the baffle plates will be unbolted with a hydraulic wrench and taken out. This will permit removal of debris from the annular region behind the baffle plates.

3. NRC Staff Activities

The NRC staff assigned on site at the beginning of the period consisted of an acting senior resident inspector, a resident inspector, and a project manager for TMI-2.

A newly selected senior resident inspector, Mr. Francis Young, reported to the site on April 2, 1989.

a. Inspection Reports

During this period, Region I issued the following inspection reports.

- TMI-1 Inspection Report No. 50-289/89-01 on March 28, 1989, addressing routine inspections of operations activities.
- TMI-1 Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) Report No. 50-289/89-99, on April 3, 1989 addressing the overall performance of Unit 1 for the period from November 1, 1987 to January 15, 1989.

b. Proposal to Dispose of Accident - Generated Water

The public hearing on evaporation of accident-generated water (AGW) at Three Mile Island Unit 2 by the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board (ASLB) concluded on Tuesday, November 15, 1988. Contentions litigated were the analysis of the "no action alternative," characterization of the AGW, evaluations of potential release of micro-organisms, and the health effects of tritium. The ASLB ruled in favor of the licensee on February 3, 1989. The joint intervenors requested a stay and filed an intent to appeal the decision to the Atomic Safety and Licensing Appeal Board (ASLAB) on February 20, 1989.

On Tuesday, April 4, 1989 the ASLAB denied the request for a stay. On Thursday April 13 the NRC Commissioners, by a 4-0 vote, affirmed the ASLB ruling. The ASLB ruling is now immediately effective. The operation of the AGW disposal system is now dependent on resolution of detailed technical issues with the NRC staff and construction and start-up testing by the licensee.

c. Safety Evaluation for Upper Core Support Assembly Defueling

On April 4, 1989 the NRC staff issued an approval letter and Safety Evaluation (SE) for Upper Core Support Assembly (UCSA) defueling. This approval allows the licensee to remove baffle plate sections of the UCSA. The SE evaluated the licensee's load handling safety program and the potential consequences of load drops involving the baffle plate sections.

d. Public Meetings

The Advisory Panel for the Decontamination of Three Mile Island Unit 2 met on Thursday, April 13, 1989. The panel was briefed on the status of the AGW disposal and the status of the Post Defueling Monitored Storage (PDMS) environmental evaluation by the NRC staff. The GPUN staff briefed the panel on the status of cleanup activities, the offsite radiation monitoring program, and cleanup scheduling and funding. The next meeting of the Advisory Panel is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 27, 1989 at the Holiday Inn in Center City, Harrisburg.