

Subject: Text of letter

Date: Wednesday, November 11, 2009 2:38 PM

From: Hannah, Roger <Roger.Hannah@nrc.gov>

To: "dflessner@timesfreepress.com" <dflessner@timesfreepress.com>

Conversation: Text of letter

Dave, I finally figured out how (I think) to just convert and paste the letter below...hope this works.

Roger

Mr. Preston D. Swafford
Chief Nuclear Officer and Executive Vice President
Tennessee Valley Authority
3R Lookout Place
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402-2801

SUBJECT: BROWNS FERRY NUCLEAR PLANT - STATUS OF NRC TRIENNIAL FIRE PROTECTION BASELINE INSPECTION

Dear Mr. Swafford:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with a status of our efforts regarding recently-performed fire protection inspections conducted at your Browns Ferry site.

On April 24, 2009, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) completed a focused fire protection baseline inspection at your Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant, Units 1, 2, and 3. The purpose of that inspection was to assess the impact of revised safe shutdown instructions on your operators' ability to perform required actions in response to fire events, and to verify that operator manual actions with short time requirements were both feasible and reliable. The inspection team identified four unresolved items involving your fire safe shutdown analysis and your use of operator manual actions, documented in NRC inspection report 5000259/2009007, 5000260/2009007, 5000296/2009007.

On October 9, 2009, the NRC completed the onsite portion of our scheduled triennial fire protection baseline inspection at your Browns Ferry facility. This inspection included a review of the unresolved items identified during the April 2009, inspection. We conducted a meeting with Browns Ferry management and staff to describe the results of this inspection, including potential violations of NRC regulations. These potential violations involve the use of manual actions in lieu of providing the physical protection of safe shutdown equipment and cables required by 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix R, Sections III.G.1 and III.G.2. In addition, the inspection team identified potential violations associated with an inadequate fire response procedure, inadequate compensatory measures and inadequate emergency lighting.

During our in-office inspection, we have been working with your staff to get additional information needed to assess the significance of these potential findings. We expect to complete this effort soon and issue the inspection report in early December. Before issuing the report, we will conduct a final inspection exit meeting to inform you of the results of the inspection, including the significance of any identified violations.

Although we have identified some issues with the Browns Ferry fire protection program, we recognize that you have taken steps, including revised procedures and additional compensatory measures such as fire watches, to address these issues. In addition, we anticipate that your transition to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 805 will thoroughly address these fire protection issues at Browns Ferry.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of the NRC's document system

(ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Sincerely,

Luis A. Reyes
Regional Administrator

Docket Nos.: 50-259, 50-260, 50-296
License Nos.: DPR-33, DPR-52, DPR-68