



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
611 RYAN PLAZA DRIVE, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-8064**

May 29, 2001

J. H. Swailes, Vice President of
Nuclear Energy
Nebraska Public Power District
P.O. Box 98
Brownville, Nebraska 68321

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL ASSESSMENT LETTER - COOPER NUCLEAR STATION
(REPORT 50-298/01-01)**

Dear Mr. Swailes:

On May 8, 2001, the NRC staff completed its end-of-cycle plant performance assessment of Cooper Nuclear Station. The end-of-cycle review for Cooper Nuclear Station involved the participation of all technical divisions in evaluating performance indicators for the most recent quarter and inspection results for the period April 2, 2000, through March 31, 2001. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our assessment of your safety performance during this period and our plans for future inspections at your facility so that you will have an opportunity to prepare for these inspections and to inform us of any planned inspections which may conflict with your plant activities.

Overall, Cooper Nuclear Station operated in a manner that preserved public health and safety and fully met all cornerstone objectives. Plant performance was within the Regulatory Response Column of the NRC's Action Matrix, based on one white finding identified in October 2000. The White inspection finding dealt with the failure of the exercise critique process to identify a problem with the risk significant planning standard in the Emergency Preparedness area. Your corrective actions in the Emergency Preparedness area were reviewed during a supplemental inspection performed in April 2001. The results of this inspection are still pending.

While plant performance for the most recent quarter is within the regulatory response column of the Action Matrix, there were additional potentially safety significant inspection findings during the first three quarters of the assessment cycle. These findings involved a large number of degraded environmental qualification treatments of electrical splices associated with safety-related equipment. The final significance of the degraded environmental qualification treatments is still under review as part of the Significance Determination Process.

Additionally, the staff identified a potential adverse trend in the cross-cutting area of problem identification and resolution. Weak performance in identifying environmental qualification deficiencies and a number of NRC identified examples of lack of a questioning attitude among operators when they evaluated operability of degraded or nonconforming conditions indicated an adverse trend in the problem identification and resolution area. We intend to focus effort on this adverse trend during the next problem identification and resolution inspection.

The enclosure details the scheduled inspections that will occur through May 31, 2002. The inspection plan is provided to minimize the resource impact on your staff and to allow for scheduling conflicts and personnel availability to be resolved in advance of inspector arrival onsite. Routine resident inspections are not listed due to their ongoing and continuous nature.

For your information, the NRC is in the process of aligning the inspection and assessment cycle with the calendar year. In order to transition to a calendar year cycle (January 1 through December 31), the next inspection and assessment cycle will consist of only three quarters (i.e., the second, third, and fourth calendar quarters of CY 2001). As a result, a quarterly review will be conducted for the third calendar quarter (July 1 through September 30) in lieu of a midcycle review. The impact on the inspection plan, which is included as an enclosure, is minimal. Activities planned for the transition cycle represent only 60-80 percent of those activities that would be accomplished during a typical 12-month inspection and assessment cycle.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.790 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

If circumstances arise which cause us to change this inspection plan, we will contact you to discuss the change as soon as possible. Please contact me at (817) 860-8185 with any questions you may have regarding this letter or the inspection plan.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Ken E. Brockman, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket: 50-298
License: DPR-46

Enclosure:
Cooper Nuclear Station Inspection/Activity Plan

cc w/enclosure:
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Electronic distribution from ADAMS by RIV:
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RIV:SPE:DRP/C	C:DRP/C	D:DRS	D:DRP	OE:NRR/IIPB
DPLoveless;df	CSMarschall	ATHowell	KEBrockman	JAIsom
/RA/	/RA/	/RA/	/RA/	E-DPLoveless for
5/15/01	5/15/01	5/18/01	5/24/01	5/24/01

C:DRP/C	RA			
<i>Signature</i>	<i>EWMerschoff</i>			
KEBrockman	/RA/			
5/29/01	5/25/01			

Cooper
Inspection / Activity Plan
06/01/2001 - 05/31/2002

Unit Number	Inspection Activity	Title	No. of Staff on Site	Planned Dates		Inspection Type
				Start	End	
RPC-01Q - RESIDENT INSPECTION			2			
1	IP 7111101	Adverse Weather Protection		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111104	Equipment Alignment (Quarterly)		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111105Q	Fire Protection		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111106	Flood Protection Measures		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111111Q	Licensed Operator Requalification		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111112Q	Maintenance Rule Implementation		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111113	Maintenance Risk Assessments & Emergent Work Evaluation		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111115	Operability Evaluations		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111119	Post Maintenance Testing		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111122	Surveillance Testing		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111123	Temporary Plant Modifications		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111406	Drill Evaluation		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		04/01/2001	07/07/2001	Baseline Inspections
EMB - SSD&PCI			7			
1	IP 7111121	Safety System Design and Performance Capability		06/04/2001	06/08/2001	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111121	Safety System Design and Performance Capability		06/18/2001	06/22/2001	Baseline Inspections
EMB - 50.59			1			
1	IP 7111102	Evaluation of Changes, Tests, or Experiments		06/18/2001	06/22/2001	Baseline Inspections
PSB-RP2 - GASEOUS & LIQUID EFFLUENTS			2			
1	IP 7112201	Radioactive Gaseous and Liquid Effluent Treatment and Monitoring Systems		07/09/2001	07/13/2001	Baseline Inspections
PSB-RP3 - RAD MONITORING INSTRUMENTATION			1			
1	IP 7112103	Radiation Monitoring Instrumentation		07/23/2001	07/27/2001	Baseline Inspections
PSB-RP4 - RAD MATERIALS PROCESSING & SHIPPING			1			
1	IP 7112202	Radioactive Material Processing and Transportation		08/20/2001	08/24/2001	Baseline Inspections
OB-PIR - PROBLEM ID INSP			3			
1	IP 71152	Identification and Resolution of Problems		09/10/2001	09/21/2001	Baseline Inspections
OB-RQ - REQUAL INSP			2			
1	IP 7111111B	Licensed Operator Requalification		10/15/2001	10/19/2001	Baseline Inspections
PSB-RP5 - RAD ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING			1			
1	IP 7112203	Radiological Environmental Monitoring Program		10/15/2001	10/19/2001	Baseline Inspections
EMB - ISI			1			
1	IP 7111108	Inservice Inspection Activities		11/12/2001	11/16/2001	Baseline Inspections
PSB-RP6 - ACCESS CONTROL TO RAD SIGN AREAS & PIV			3			
1	IP 7112101	Access Control to Radiologically Significant Areas		11/12/2001	11/16/2001	Baseline Inspections

This report does not include INPO and OUTAGE activities.
This report shows only on-site and announced inspection procedures.

Cooper
Inspection / Activity Plan
06/01/2001 - 05/31/2002

Unit Number	Inspection Activity	Title	No. of Staff on Site	Planned Dates		Inspection Type
				Start	End	
	PSB-RP6	- ACCESS CONTROL TO RAD SIGN AREAS & PIV	3			
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		11/12/2001	11/16/2001	Baseline Inspections
	EMB	- MAINTENANCE RULE BIENNIAL	1			
1	IP 7111112B	Maintenance Rule Implementation		02/25/2002	03/01/2002	Baseline Inspections
	PSB-RP7	- ALARA PLANNING AND CONTROLS (4)	1			
1	IP 7112102	ALARA Planning and Controls		03/18/2002	03/22/2002	Baseline Inspections
	PSB-S1	- ACCESS AUTH/CONTROL, SEC PLAN & PIV	1			
1	IP 7113001	Access Authorization Program (Behavior Observation Only)		03/25/2002	03/29/2002	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7113002	Access Control (Search of Personnel, Packages, and Vehicles: Identification and Authorizatio		03/25/2002	03/29/2002	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7113004	Security Plan Changes		03/25/2002	03/29/2002	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		03/25/2002	03/29/2002	Baseline Inspections
	RP-1	- ACRSA AND PIV	1			
1	IP 7112101	Access Control to Radiologically Significant Areas		04/08/2002	04/12/2002	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		04/08/2002	04/12/2002	Baseline Inspections
	EMB	- MODIFICATIONS BIENNIAL	2			
1	IP 7111117B	Permanent Plant Modifications		04/15/2002	04/19/2002	Baseline Inspections