

March 31, 2000

Mr. Charles H. Cruse
Vice President - Nuclear Energy
Baltimore Gas and Electric Company
Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant
1650 Calvert Cliffs Parkway
Lusby, MD 20657-4702

SUBJECT: PLANT PERFORMANCE REVIEW - CALVERT CLIFFS

Dear Mr. Cruse:

The purpose of this letter is to communicate the NRC's assessment of Calvert Cliffs performance and to inform you of our planned inspections at the facility. On February 24, 2000, we completed a Plant Performance Review (PPR) of Calvert Cliffs. We conducted this review to develop an integrated overview of the safety performance of the plant. We used the results of the PPR in planning and allocating inspection resources and as an input to our senior management meeting (SMM) process. This PPR evaluated inspection results and safety performance information for the period from January 16, 1999, through January 31, 2000, but emphasized the last six months to ensure that our assessment reflected your current performance. Our previous summary of plant performance at Calvert Cliffs was provided to you in a letter dated April 9, 1999.

The NRC has been developing a revised reactor oversight process that will replace our existing inspection and assessment processes, including the PPR, the SMM, and the Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP). We recently completed a pilot program for the revised reactor oversight process at nine participating sites and are making necessary adjustments based on feedback and lessons learned. We plan to begin implementation of the revised reactor oversight process industry-wide on April 2, 2000.

This PPR reflects continued NRC process improvements as we make the transition into the revised reactor oversight process. The following summary of plant performance is organized differently from our previous performance summaries. Instead of characterizing our assessment results by SALP functional area, we organized the results into the strategic performance areas embodied in the revised reactor oversight process. In assessing your performance, we have considered the historical performance indicator data that you submitted in January 2000 in conjunction with our inspection results. The results of this PPR were used to establish the inspection plan in accordance with the new risk-informed inspection program (consisting of baseline and supplemental inspections). Although this letter incorporates some terms and concepts associated with the new oversight process, it does not reflect the much broader changes in inspection and assessment that will be evident after we have fully implemented our revised reactor oversight process.

During the last six months of the assessment period, both units operated at or near full power, except for two Unit 1 reactor shutdowns. We have not identified any significant performance

issues in any of the strategic performance areas (reactor safety, radiation safety, and safeguards) during the assessment period and observed that Calvert Cliffs continued to operate in a safe manner. Therefore, we currently plan to conduct only normal baseline inspections at your facility, as noted in the attached inspection plan.

Control room operators performed well during transients, high-risk evolutions, and normal operations. We noted that secondary plant problems required the operators to close the main steam isolation valves during both Unit 1 shutdowns. These operator actions, although appropriate and in accordance with operating procedures, removed the normal reactor heat sink capability from service and complicated the recovery for both shutdowns. We will monitor your progress to minimize events of this type during our baseline inspections at your facility.

The Calvert Cliffs staff effectively used risk insights to plan, schedule, and complete maintenance and surveillance activities. Maintenance was appropriately performed, although there was one instance of improperly performed electrical maintenance (personnel error) which caused a Unit 1 reactor trip. The reliability and performance of the station emergency diesel generators (EDGs) has improved, although some EDG concerns continued to be pursued. Engineering staff technical support and design related activities were sometimes inconsistent, as demonstrated by the protracted resolution of 1A EDG reliability issues. We will monitor your progress in response to these issues during our baseline inspections.

Enclosure 1 contains a historical listing of plant issues, referred to as the Plant Issues Matrix (PIM), that were used during this PPR process to arrive at our integrated view of your performance trends. The PIM for this assessment is grouped by the prior SALP functional areas of operations, maintenance, engineering, and plant support, although the future PIM will be organized along the cornerstones of safety, as described in the revised reactor oversight process. The PIM includes items summarized from inspection reports or other docketed correspondence between the NRC and Baltimore Gas and Electric Company regarding Calvert Cliffs. We did not document all aspects of licensee programs and performance that may be functioning appropriately. Rather, we only documented issues that we believe warrant management attention or represent noteworthy aspects of performance. In addition, the PPR may also have considered some pre-decisional and draft material that does not appear in the attached PIM, including observations from events and inspections that had occurred since our last inspection report was issued, but had not yet received full review and consideration. We will make this material publically available as part of the normal issuance of our inspection reports and other correspondence.

Enclosure 2 lists our planned inspections for the period April 2000 through March 2001 at Calvert Cliffs to allow you to resolve scheduling conflicts and personnel availability in advance of our inspector arrival onsite. Since many of the inspections at Calvert Cliffs and at the other Region I facilities during this period involve a team of inspectors, our ability to reschedule inspections is limited. Therefore, we request you inform us as soon as possible of any scheduling conflicts. The inspection schedule for the latter half of the period is more tentative and may be adjusted in the future due to emerging performance issues at Calvert Cliffs or other Region I facilities. Routine resident inspections are not listed due to their ongoing and continuous nature.

We will inform you of any changes to the inspection plan. If you have any questions, please contact me at (610) 337-5224.

Charles H. Cruse

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Sincerely,

/RA/

Michele G. Evans, Chief
Projects Branch 1
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos. 05000317, 05000318

License Nos. DPR-53, DPR-69

Enclosures: 1. Plant Issues Matrix
2. Inspection Plan

Docket Nos. 05000317

05000318

License Nos. DPR-53

DPR-69

cc w/encls:

B. Montgomery, Director, Nuclear Regulatory Matters (CCNPP)

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