



NRC NEWS

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NRC BANS FORMER SENIOR REACTOR OPERATOR FROM NRC-LICENSED ACTIVITIES FOR THREE YEARS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued an order banning a former senior reactor operator at the Susquehanna nuclear power plant from any involvement in NRC-licensed activities for three years. Susquehanna is a two-reactor plant located in Salem Township (Luzerne County), Pa., and operated by PPL.

NRC took the action after Keith Davis failed to respond to an earlier order issued by the NRC. Davis was arrested on June 19, 2006, for driving under the influence of alcohol. Under plant procedures and NRC requirements, he was required to report the arrest to PPL upon his first day back at work, which was June 27, 2006. However, he failed to do so. After the arrest came to light, PPL moved Davis to another position with the company and subsequently dismissed him. His operating license was terminated.

After an investigation by the NRC Office of Investigations, Davis requested the use of Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) to resolve the matter. ADR, in this case, refers to a process in which a neutral mediator with no decision-making authority assists the NRC and license-holders in reaching an agreement resolving any differences regarding an enforcement action. The agreement is then confirmed by the NRC in an order.

As a result of the ADR session, NRC issued a Confirmatory Order in November 2007, citing Davis for failing to report the off-site arrest as required. At that time, the agency did not bar him from licensed activities. In return, Davis agreed to take several actions to re-emphasize the importance of procedural adherence to others, including writing a report that discussed lessons learned from the event and submitting it to at least three national organizations for possible publication, and developing a training plan for licensed and non-licensed operator training at Susquehanna regarding procedural adherence as it relates to meeting the intent of procedures. Davis was also required to, among other things, submit a written response to the NRC explaining why the agency should have confidence in his ability to follow plant procedures and meet NRC regulations should he work in the industry again. The Confirmatory Order gave Davis three months to complete the actions and an additional 30 days to inform the NRC that the commitments have been met.

As of the date of this enforcement action, Davis has not responded to the Confirmatory Order and has not completed the agreed-upon activities. In the letter forwarding the recent order to Davis, NRC Enforcement Director Cynthia A. Carpenter said the failure to complete the activities “has resulted in the loss of reasonable assurance that you may be relied upon to comply with NRC requirements.”

Davis also must notify the NRC of his first employment in NRC-licensed activities for a period of three years following the period of the ban.

Davis must respond to the order within 20 days.

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