

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road King of Prussia, PA 19406
Fax: 610/337-5241
Internet: dps@nrc.gov or nas@nrc.gov

I-99-44

April 15, 1999

Contact: Diane Screnci (610/337-5330)
Neil A. Sheehan (610/337-5331)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NRC ISSUES LATEST PERFORMANCE REVIEW FOR INDIAN POINT 3

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has found that safety performance remains acceptable at Indian Point 3 nuclear power plant in the NRC's latest plant performance review. The plant, operated by the New York Power Authority (NYPA) is located in Buchanan, N.Y.

This latest review assesses performance at the plant from April 1998 through January 1999.

In a letter to NYPA outlining the results of the review, NRC Region I official, A. Randolph Blough, said that "Performance was acceptable in the area of operations with an emphasis on plant safety and conservative decision-making." Overall, he said, engineering continued to improve, as did performance in work control. Performance in the area of plant support, which includes security, radiological controls and emergency preparedness, remained effective.

Mr. Blough said that while performance was acceptable, "some areas warranted continued attention." He said the number of emergent and repetitive equipment problems is evidence that considerable challenges remain.

In addition to the normal NRC inspection program, the NRC plans to conduct an operational safety team inspection at the site. Two other inspections will review engineering and outage planning, and maintenance program implementation.

The text of the plant performance review letter is available from the NRC Region I Office of Public Affairs and on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/ppr>.

NRC reviews safety performance twice a year at every licensed nuclear power plant in the nation. These reviews, called plant performance reviews (PPRs) give the agency staff an integrated assessment of plant performance and provide a basis for planning inspection activities.

Plant performance reviews are an interim measure NRC is

utilizing to monitor nuclear power plant safety. The agency began using it for this purpose after suspending the Systematic Assessment of License Performance (SALP) process until a new oversight and assessment program is developed. Previously, SALP reports were issued every 12 to 24 months.

The new reactor oversight and assessment program being developed will provide quarterly performance reports, based on a number of performance indicators and on inspection findings. This program will be tested at eight plants beginning in June and will be extended to all plants next January. A full description of the new program is available on the NRC web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA/primer.htm>.

#