



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406
Site: <http://www.nrc.gov>

No. I-10-004
Contact: Diane Screnci, 610/337-5330
Neil Sheehan, 610/337-5331

February 22, 2010
E-mail: opa1@nrc.gov

NRC SENDS SPECIAL INSPECTION TEAM TO CALVERT CLIFFS

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has sent a team of inspectors to the Calvert Cliffs nuclear power plant to follow-up on the shutdown of both reactors last week. The two-unit plant, which is operated by Constellation Energy LLC, is located in Lusby, Md.

The five-member Special Inspection Team began its work today (2/22). The inspectors will focus their efforts on gaining a better understanding of what happened.

On Thursday, February 18, one of two electrical distribution buses for the site was lost at about 8:24 a.m. A bus is an electrical connection between multiple electrical devices. This loss of power caused Unit 2's reactor coolant pumps and reactor to automatically trip. One Unit 1 reactor coolant pump also tripped, resulting in a unit trip.

The loss of the electrical bus also caused a loss of power to some safety systems. Nuclear power plants are designed with backup power sources, typically emergency diesel generators, to provide power to essential safety systems. At Unit 1, one of the emergency diesel generators (EDG) started as expected and supplied power to the affected safety bus. The Unit 2 EDG initially started, but then tripped. Workers tied-in another power source to return power to the Unit 2 bus and its associated redundant safety equipment.

All other safety systems responded as designed. Both units are stable. Unit 1 began a pre-planned refueling outage on Friday, February 19.

“There was no safety consequence to plant workers, the public, or the environment associated with the shutdowns,” said NRC Regional Administrator Sam Collins. “The NRC resident inspectors were in the plant’s control room to monitor the reactor operators’ response,” he added. “The team will review the causes of the shutdown and how the plant operators and equipment responded to it.”

The team will document its findings and conclusions in a report to be issued within 45 days of end of the inspection.

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