



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
612 EAST LAMAR BLVD, SUITE 400
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-4125

California Energy Commission

DOCKETED

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September 6, 2011

EA-10-024

Mr. Peter Dietrich
Senior Vice President and
Chief Nuclear Officer
Southern California Edison Company
San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station
P.O. Box 128
San Clemente, CA 92674-0128

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF SAN ONOFRE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION
CHILLING EFFECT LETTER

Dear Mr. Dietrich:

On March 2, 2010, the NRC issued a Chilling Effect Letter (ML100601272) regarding work environment issues at the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS). This letter was issued in response to numerous observations including employees expressing difficulty or inability to use the corrective action program, a lack of knowledge or mistrust of the Nuclear Safety Concerns Program, a substantiated case of a supervisor creating a chilled work environment in his/her work group, a perceived fear of retaliation for raising safety concerns, and a high number of allegations related to the safety conscious work environment (SCWE) at SONGS.

On March 31, 2010, you provided the information requested in the Chilling Effect Letter and the immediate actions you had taken to address the SCWE concerns. In addition, you identified near-term and longer-term actions you planned to take (ML101210004). On August 31, 2010, you provided the status of your corrective actions and included the set of performance metrics being used to measure progress in improving SCWE at SONGS (ML102450207).

During 2010 and 2011, we reviewed your action plans and root cause evaluation to address the work environment issues at the site. We also performed inspections in 2010 and 2011 to review your cause analyses, completed and planned corrective actions, metrics and measures you implemented to monitor your progress, and results of independent safety culture surveys and assessments performed in 2010 and 2011. These inspections included the 2010 biennial Problem Identification and Resolution (PI&R) team inspection, a focused PI&R team inspection in July, 2010, an inspection to review maintenance and operations in October, 2010, and additional focused PI&R team inspections in January and June, 2011 (ML102110445, ML102420696, ML110420223, ML111250473 and ML112130381 respectively). Additionally, NRC inspectors interviewed over 500 plant employees in focus group and individual interviews concerning these work environment issues. The results of our inspections and your progress in

addressing the issues indicated in the Chilling Effect Letter were discussed during public meetings on September 16, 2010, December 14, 2010, and during our Annual Assessment public meeting held on April 28, 2011.

Based on the results of the inspections listed above, a significant reduction in the number of allegations received in 2011 compared to 2010, site metrics, and results of interviews and safety culture surveys and assessments, the NRC has determined that you have made reasonable progress in addressing your work environment issues at SONGS. Specifically, in evaluating your scope of efforts and progress in addressing these issues, the NRC determined that you recognized the issues, and have implemented a range of corrective actions. The NRC has determined that your actions, which included implementation of new site-wide programs to continue improving the work environment issues at SONGS, have been effective in addressing the underlying issues that led to the issuance of the Chilling Effect Letter. Therefore, the NRC considers that the SCWE theme, as discussed in IMC 0305 and Enforcement Manual Section 6.5.4, "Chilling Effect of Actual or Potential Discrimination," no longer exists at SONGS and the Chilling Effect Letter will no longer be considered for plant assessment purposes. Notwithstanding this conclusion, the NRC will continue to monitor your activities to address work environment issues at SONGS through the baseline inspection program to verify the effectiveness and sustainability of your efforts in this area.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and your response if you choose to provide one will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the NRC's document system (ADAMS), accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. To the extent possible, your response should not include any personal privacy or proprietary information so that it can be made available to the Public without redaction.

If you have any additional questions regarding these matters, please contact Mr. Ryan Lantz, Chief, Reactor Projects Branch D, at (817) 860-8173.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elmo E. Collins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Elmo" being more prominent.

Elmo E. Collins
Regional Administrator

Docket Nos. 50-361, 50-362
License Nos. NPF-10, NPF-15