



USA INSIDE



The first Management System Review will be conducted at Comanche Peak, pictured above.

USA/STARS Work on Joint Response to SOER 10-2

• Jay Wagner, Public Service Enterprise Group

USA and STARS members have combined efforts to respond to Significant Operating Experience Event Report (SOER) 10-2. A USA/STARS SOER 10-2 Team, led by Team Leader **Art Rone**, USA Management Council Sponsor **Jay Wagner** (PSEG), and **John Christensen** (USA Facilitator) has been conferencing weekly since October, and is directing the most collaborative and comprehensive effort of its kind in the industry. Altogether, 16 Alliance nuclear stations will be taking part in SOER readiness and implementation assessment activities.

SOER 10-2 was issued by INPO on September 13 to address an increase in the frequency of significant events in the industry. INPO's events analysis group identified the event trend earlier this year, and after internal analysis, INPO's

CEO Jim Ellis sent a personal letter to each industry CEO on May 25. The letter was a call to action and the start of the SOER development. SOER 10-2 is titled "The Engaged, Thinking Organization" because it is meant to address a recent increase in significant events in the industry, reflecting shortcomings in leader, supervisor, and individual contributor behaviors. The behavior shortcomings are characterized by deficiencies in leadership, questioning attitude, risk perception, accountability, and use of lessons learned from significant operating experience.

The first tasking for the USA/STARS Team was to develop a common action plan to address SOER 10-2 recommendation 1. This recommendation is aimed at Leader Behaviors, and in the past several months, the USA/STARS Team has made significant progress in developing the recommendation 1 action plan. Completed or in progress activities include:

- The team developed a common action plan response for recommendations 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d for each USA/STARS station, and each USA/STARS station provided their action plan to INPO on December 7; *cont. on pg 2*

New Core Peer Teams Established

• Tim Pilmaier, OPPD & Todd Haberland, DTE Energy

Core peer teams are essential to maximizing the synergies the Alliance has to offer. USA core peer teams are in place for essential performance areas such as Chemistry, Engineering, and Radiation Protection. These teams have a charter and specific objects, often including business plan deliverables.

Recently, the USA Management Council has undertaken an effort to align our USA Core Peer Teams with the traditional INPO evaluation areas. One of the INPO Evaluation areas that did not have a current core peer team is the Performance Improvement (PI) area. Therefore, a new Performance Improvement core peer team has been established.

The long-term focus of the new PI core peer team will be to strategically identify areas of USA fleet performance where traditional performance improvement tools can be used to improve plant and fleet performance. To begin, the team will need to develop and approve a charter, which will provide structure and guidance for team conduct as well as focus and direction for the new team. Then the team needs to identify key performance indicators in the performance improvement area. Once the indicators are developed, gaps in performance can be identified and addressed by fleet-supported actions.

The second team to become a core peer team is the Security Team. The USA Board of Directors recognized the *cont. on pg 4*



*Fort Calhoun Station, pictured above, is home to both **Tim Pilmaier**, Management Council rep for the new PI team, and **Al Clark**, team lead for the new Security Team.*



Excellence in employee training is important part of maintaining excellence in operations.

Training Becomes a Primary Focus Area for 2011

• Joe Delmar, Public Service Enterprise Group

For 2011, the USA Board of Directors has made successful training accreditation renewal a primary focus. Since 2007, USA/STARS stations have accounted for four of the last seven stations that had training programs go on probation. In addition, several other training programs had difficulty in gaining accreditation renewal.

“These results are unacceptable and an issue that needs to be corrected immediately,” said **Pete Tocci**, team leader for the USA training team and corporate training manager for PSEG Nuclear. “A variety of factors have contributed to these results and we’ll work together to ensure plants attain successful accreditation renewal the first time they present to the accreditation board.”

The National Academy for Nuclear Training manages the accreditation of utility training programs. The accreditation process is designed to identify strengths and weaknesses in training programs and to assist in making needed improvements. Each INPO member company that operates a nuclear-powered electric generating plant has made a commitment to achieve and maintain accreditation of its training programs. With the support of its members, INPO developed the accreditation objectives, criteria and supporting guidance and assists members in developing, implementing, and maintaining job performance-based training programs while evaluating the quality and effectiveness of industry training programs.

According to INPO, the major reasons for the recent probation are lack of management oversight and the inability to “find and fix” problems. These two issues combined with a poor understanding of the Systematic Approach to Training (SAT) were the main reason the accreditation board placed the stations on probation. It was also noted that there was a sense of “isolationism” for the USA plants. INPO also believes oversight {Nuclear Oversight (NOS/QA) as well as a lack of fleet oversight} was not well equipped to provide intrusive training program reviews and questioned the depth of self-assessments and use of the corrective action program to aggressively correct training issues. In addition, a variety of other issues were identified including failure to resolve training program weaknesses, inconsistencies in the implementation of standards and expectations and ineffective implementation of SAT and the accreditation process.

“Our goal is 100 percent accreditation renewal,” said Tocci. “We are taking action to work as a fleet to proactively prevent training programs from going on probation, rather than dedicating the resources to recover from probation in the six months after going on probation.” According to Tocci, a Training Peer Team Charter has been established with set priorities and action items. The training team recognizes there needs to be better sharing of information with peers especially on assessments, training oversight reports and best practices. The team also noted program ownership, process implementation and identifying and resolving training issues needs to improve to help maintain high standards.

For more information, please contact Team Lead Pete Tocci, peter.tocci@pseg.com.

SOER 10-2 *cont. from pg 1*

- Management System Review assessment templates were developed for each of 5 areas – Corrective Action Program, Observation Program, Work Management Program, System Health Program, and Individual/Team Performance Monitoring – on December 15;
- Management System Review team members were identified. Each station is providing an assessment team member to staff 5 teams to perform 3 assessments each, for a total of 15 assessments, from January to June 2010. The level of qualification and experience of each team member is high. The first round of assessments will be led by Art Rone in order to establish a consistent approach and routine;
- The USA Operating Experience Networking Team participated in establishing actions to strengthen the use of industry operating experience. The USA/STARS Operations Core Peer Team developed a plan to identify observers and observer familiarization and to develop an observer checklist to support a shift manager observation program.

The pace of activities associated with SOER 10-2 will increase in 1st quarter 2011. Case studies will start at each station, and will include mixed groups of managers and first line supervisors. The first Management System Review will be conducted at Comanche Peak starting January 10, with a steady schedule of follow on assessments. Stations will be completing procedure revisions that promote management involvement in processing and reinforcing significant operating experience, and the Shift Manager Observation Program will commence.

INPO is taking a unique approach to evaluate each station’s implementation of SOER 10-2. INPO teams will evaluate one station from each fleet, including one USA and one STARS. An intended result of the INPO team visit is to orient a host peer in conducting assessments at the other fleet stations. The USA/STARS Team will use an approach similar to the Management System assessments to conduct the SOER implementation assessments from July to December 2011. *cont. on pg 4*



Above: SONGS Health Physics Engineer Eric Goldin, right, shows a young visitor how to use a Geiger counter to detect low levels of radiation in a radium dial clock.

Below: Bob Grove, senior scientist from Southern California Edison's Corporate Environmental Health and Safety Group, examines samples of local kelp with a young open house visitor.



representatives from local cities and jurisdictions through the site's Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) also contributed greatly to the well-received event.

The event was such a success, adds Culverhouse, that plans are underway to host another off-site open house in 2011. "We're hoping to make it a semi-annual event," she says. "The positive responses were overwhelming and we want to make sure we continue to strengthen our partnerships with the community and provide our proud employees with an opportunity to show their family and friends what they do."

CNS Achieves Plant Milestone

• Drew Niehaus, Nebraska Public Power District

CNS achieved an important milestone Oct. 21 when the first of eight casks was safely loaded into the horizontal storage module (HSM). In all, eight casks of spent fuel will be moved to the independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI) pad this year.

"The spent fuel pool was almost full before the ISFSI project began," said Sterling Bray, dry cask storage program manager. "Once four more casks full of spent fuel are removed from the pool, CNS will be able to achieve full-core offload if necessary." Full-core offload is important because, if an issue were to arise where all the fuel should need to be removed from the reactor vessel, the fuel pool could be used for storage.

The process of moving a cask of fuel to the pad is not a rapid one. One day was spent lowering the cask into the pool and another was spent loading it with fuel. Once filled, the cask was removed from the pool and the 90-hour drying and welding process began. Another day was needed to lower the cask from the fuel pool floor to the 903' level. The process concluded with the cask's transfer to and insertion into the HSM.

"Safety is the utmost priority for the ISFSI project," stated Deet Willis, general manager of plant operations. "The loading of the first cask is a tremendous achievement for Cooper. However, we will not hesitate to put it on hold if there's the slightest hint of any safety concern."

The ISFSI project is scheduled to conclude in January with the installation of the final cask into the HSM.

Taking the Plant to the People: SONGS Unique Open House

• Lynn Sakamoto, Southern California Edison

How do you take the mystery out of nuclear when post-9-11 security constraints minimize tour opportunities and your plant does not have a visitor center? The San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, located just south of San Clemente, CA, found an answer: Take the plant to the people.

"We understand the importance of maintaining a strong partnership with the community," explains External Affairs Manager Barbara Culverhouse. "So on Aug. 12, we set up a road show, so to speak, and took 'SONGS: An Interactive Exhibit and Open House for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station' to the local high school for a three-hour opportunity for the public to find out what we do and how we do it."

The open house included eight booths, staffed by SONGS subject matter experts, as follows: How a Nuclear Power Plant Works, License Renewal, Steam Generator Replacement Project, Emergency Planning, Security at a Nuclear Power Plant, Environmental Activities, Community Partnerships and Career and Educational Opportunities.

Six-foot-tall colorful posters provided basic information for each booth, and visitors also received handouts to take home. Interactive exhibits included Geiger counter demonstrations and samples of KI pills at the Emergency Planning booth, microscope examinations and a touch tank filled with live sea creatures at the Environmental Activities booth, and a video show and display of uniforms and equipment at the Security at a Nuclear Power Plant booth.

"We also made sure we had something for everyone, so we included a face-painter and arts and crafts activities for the young at heart," adds Culverhouse. "We even hired a local caterer to ensure the event had an economic benefit for the SONGS community." The SONGS Interjurisdictional Planning Committee (IPC), comprised of

representatives from local cities and jurisdictions through the site's Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) also contributed greatly to the well-received event.

The event was such a success, adds Culverhouse, that plans are underway to host another off-site open house in 2011. "We're hoping to make it a semi-annual event," she says. "The positive responses were overwhelming and we want to make sure we continue to strengthen our partnerships with the community and provide our proud employees with an opportunity to show their family and friends what they do."



The cask exits the Reactor Building at CNS and begins down the heavy-haul road to the horizontal storage modules.



In Brief

Ameren Merges Illinois Subsidiaries; Changes Utility Names

On Oct. 1, Ameren Corporation completed the merger of its three Illinois electric and natural gas utilities – AmerenCIPS, AmerenCILCO and AmerenIP – into a single public utility now known as Ameren Illinois. In addition, AmerenUE, Callaway Plant’s parent company, is now doing business as Ameren Missouri.

“This merger is the logical next step in the evolution of our business in Illinois,” stated **Thomas R. Voss**, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Ameren Corporation.

“Since the utility companies in Illinois and Missouri operate under different regulatory requirements and business models, we believe we are adding clarity for all our stakeholders by identifying each of our utility companies by the state in which it does business.” Other than the name change, Ameren Missouri and Callaway Plant will continue to operate as in the past. Callaway Plant’s operating license continues to be held by Union Electric Company, doing business as Ameren Missouri.

NPPD Receives 20 Year License Renewal for Cooper Nuclear Station

Nebraska Public Power District officials are looking forward to operating Cooper Nuclear Station an additional 20 years, following the Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s approval to renew the facility’s operating license. “This achievement represents a significant milestone of strategic importance to NPPD, its Board of Directors, the employees of Cooper Nuclear Station, southeast Nebraska communities, and our customers,” said NPPD Chief Executive Officer and President **Ron Asche**. The license renewal extends the facility’s operating life to 2034. The process for the license extension took 26 months to complete, following NPPD’s formal application to the NRC on September 29, 2008. The license includes several conditions and requirements that NPPD will perform to ensure the plant continues to operate safely.



Members of Cooper Nuclear Station’s License Renewal Team

Spotlight: USA/STARS Strategic Planning Team

Formed approximately four years ago, the Strategic Planning Team encompasses all fifteen USA and STARS member companies. In the past the team focused on items in the near term, one to two years out. During their annual meeting last September at the USA Offices, they decided upon a new direction. “The Strategic Planning Team has adjusted their focus,” stated **Kevin Moles**, USA manager, strategic initiatives. “Not only are they continuing to look for benefits in the short-term, they’re looking ten, fifteen, twenty years out.”

At their September meeting, all participating Strategic Planning team members brought their long-term strategic or capital plans. As a group each plan was reviewed and the commonalities among the plans were identified. By the end of the day and a half meeting a list of forty-four items was produced. These were plant-specific initiatives that had appeared on at least two members’ plans, with some initiatives appearing on all members’ long-term plans. All initiatives involved individual site expenditures of at least \$1 Million.

A follow-up meeting is scheduled for mid-February 2011. The combined initiatives list will be prioritized considering both the number of member sites that would be involved and the timeframe that combined efforts would need to be started. “This Strategic Planning Team understands the USA Board of Directors’ direction to function more like a fleet,” Kevin Moles continued. “They’re setting the groundwork for insuring the process is in place to share both the technical knowledge and financial savings that functioning as a fleet brings.”

SOER 10-2 *cont. from pg 2* The USA/STARS response to SOER 10-2 has been characterized by strong collaboration and teamwork. For example, Management System Review assessment templates were developed by groups of SOER 10-2 team members, lead by **Karen Hutchings** and **Lisa Dean** (Callaway), **Russ Lovell** (STP), **Dave Ambrose** (Comanche Peak), and **Bob McPherson** (SONGS). The efficiencies and synergy from this high level of cooperation should benefit each station – aggressive and thorough plans can be formulated and rigorously implemented because the work load is shared.

Teams *cont. from pg 1* increasing regulatory challenges in the Security area and wanted to elevate their support and expectations to ensure excellence is achieved. Therefore, the Security team was elevated from a networking team to a core peer team.

The goals of this team going forward include ensuring levels of excellence are upheld in KPIs, regulatory response and Force-on-Force assessments and execution. The team intends to identify performance shortfalls and work together in support of those plants with the greatest gaps to achieve fleet excellence. Furthermore, the team has a goal for 2011 of 100 percent successful security Force-On-Force fleet-wide performance. This ambitious goal is one of the Primary Focus Areas in the 2011 USA business plan, and will receive Board-level attention and support.

Core peer teams are important to the performance of USA as a whole, and the two new teams will help us continue to “work together for mutual success.”