

olations for escalated enforcement action in accordance with its enforcement policy. The violations involved SCE's failure to ensure that important-to-safety equipment was available to provide redundant drop protection for the spent fuel canister during downloading operations and to notify NRC headquarters of the incident within 24 hours.

Before making an enforcement decision, the NRC is providing SCE with the opportunity to request a predecisional enforcement conference, during which the company can provide additional information that it believes the NRC should take into consideration before making an enforcement decision. The conference would be open to the public. Alternatively, SCE can request the pursuit of an alternative dispute resolution, during which a neutral mediator would work with the two parties to help reach a resolution.

The NRC also identified three Severity Level IV violations as a result of the fuel-loading incident. Severity Level IV violations are those that the NRC considers to be less serious, but of more than minor concern, and that have resulted in no or relatively inappreciable potential safety or security consequences. According to the NRC, the violations involved failures to (1) identify conditions potentially adverse to quality for placement into SCE's correc-



Photo: NRC

San Onofre: Spent fuel transfer operations were put on hold after the August 3 incident.

tive actions program; (2) establish an adequate program for training, proficiency testing, and certification for individuals involved in downloading operations; and (3) provide adequate procedures for dry cask storage operations involving downloading operations.

"The NRC is concerned about apparent weaknesses in management oversight of the dry cask storage operations," Pruett wrote in the letter to SCE. "Your staff did

not perform adequate direct observational oversight of downloading activities performed by your contractor, ensure adequate training of individuals responsible for performing downloading operations, provide adequate procedures for downloading operations, or ensure that conditions adverse to quality were entered into the corrective action program."

Fuel transfer operations at San Onofre have been on hold since the August 3 in-



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