

From: Horner, Trina
Sent: 11/3/2011 2:12:19 PM
To: 'Cooke, Michelle' (michelle.cooke@cpuc.ca.gov)
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject: Follow up - rotor failure in Austria (not Germany)

Michelle, following up on your question about the degree of failure in the rotor machine in Austria (not Germany, as I told you), the Helms engineers told me the following: The machine in Austria had cracks that had developed and propagated to the point where the machine could survive a normal start and stop stress cycle, but did not have adequate margin to resist an overspeed event. The machine was carrying full load during a storm period, when lightning struck the power transmission line about 8 miles from the plant. The resulting electrical load rejection caused an overspeed event that led to the failure of the pole attachment. The machine took 16 seconds to stop from full speed, and caught fire after the event. The fire burned for approximately 8 hours. Although two workers were in the plant at the time of the failure, they suffered no physical injuries but have required counseling because of their exposure to the noise of the machine failure. So it sounds like it was not a "spontaneous" event, per se. Hope this helps,

Trina