

From: Redacted  
Sent: 11/23/2011 3:23:48 PM  
To: rick.tse@cpuc.ca.gov (rick.tse@cpuc.ca.gov)  
Cc: Horner, Trina (/O=PG&E/OU=CORPORATE/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=TNHC);  
Thoma, Alvin (/O=PG&E/OU=CORPORATE/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=ALT5)  
Bcc:  
Subject: Helms CPUC Inquiry

Dear Mr. Tse,

In response to your e-mail from earlier today, and further to PG&E's October 20, 2011, telephonic report to Michelle Cooke, Interim Director of CPSD, PG&E provides the following supplemental written report concerning the incident that occurred this past weekend at PG&E's Helms pumped storage facility. Please consider this PG&E's written report of this incident as required under CPUC General Order 167, Rule No. 10.4, and let us know if you would like us to forward a copy of this report to anyone else at the Commission.

(1) the event sequence that led to the incident

Helms Unit 1 was damaged during an event that started on Saturday, 11/19/11. The incident started at 0421 when Unit 1 was being taken off pump mode. The Unit 1 230 kV Generator Breaker (CB-270) failed to open but reported to the control systems that it had opened. As part of normal shutdown, the exciter was de-energized and the field discharge resistor was put into the circuit to drop the magnetic field from the rotor. With the stator coils still energized, the unit motored for approximately 15 minutes. While the unit was motoring, current was induced in the field (also known as the rotor) and that in turn overheated the field discharge resistor to the point that it caught on fire and burned several holes through the exciter cabinet. There is also evidence of heating within the generator, and rubbing of rotor components on the stator.

No one was injured in the event. Initial efforts have focused on making the facility safe and assessing the current conditions. The extent of repairs needed will be determined in the coming weeks.

(2) the preliminary assessment as to what caused the incident

CB 270 failed to open.

(3) the course of action going forward, repair or replace damage equipment, ETR, etc

Helms Unit 1 will be repaired. The scope and schedule have not been established. We have given the ISO an estimated return to service date of 5/31/11.

(4) whether the incident triggered an OSHA reporting.

No

(5) the estimated cost of damage.

In excess of \$1 million

Sincerely,

Redacted