

N372. Bringing The Industry To Dresden

In the summer of 1994, five shift supervisors from other utilities gathered at Dresden Station to spend two months on shift looking at how Dresden did business and making suggestions for improvement. The visitors also took new perspectives back to their plants.

It is more effective to bring broad industry experience and standards to the station, rather than sending a few people out to different plants. The idea originated in August 1994 as a result of a reactor scram due to low water level. The root cause investigation showed that one cause of the event was the number of operator workarounds - equipment deficiencies that operators had "worked around" for a number of years. It was decided that Dresden operations needed a better perspective on the way others run their plant. The peer team members arrived in mid-August and left in early November. Each member of the peer team was assigned to a crew and followed that crew on its rotating shifts. Their observations expanded beyond operations to areas of work control, radiation protection and the quality assurance organization. Their input to Dresden areas of focus includes:

- 1) Awareness of operator workarounds
- 2) Questioning attitudes in operators
- 3) Conservative decision-making. In particular, the peers helped operators become more aware of ways to minimize out-of-service time for safety-related equipment.
- 4) Control room communication practices
- 5) Pre-job briefings
- 6) Material condition
- 7) Reduction of contaminated areas

One key success was that the team member were peers. The operators in Dresden were able to sit down and relate one-on-one with somebody in a similar position and get some very candid feedback. The visit also gave team members a broader perspective on nuclear industry issues - and on their own jobs.

For more, "Bringing the Industry to Dresden," pp.8-9, The Nuclear Professional, Spring 1995. For further information, contact Dick Bax, Unit2 station manager, Dresden Station, Phone: 818/942-2920, ext.2912.