

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DOCKET NO. UE-10-_____

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

THOMAS C. DEMPSEY

REPRESENTING AVISTA CORPORATION

STATE OF WASH.
UTIL. AND TRANSP.
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I. INTRODUCTION

1
2 **Q. Please state your name, business address, and present position with Avista**
3 **Corporation.**

4 A. My name is Thomas C. Dempsey. My business address is 1411 East Mission
5 Avenue, Spokane, Washington, and I am employed by the Company in the Energy Resources
6 Department. My title is Manager, Generation Joint Projects.

7 **Q. What is your educational background and prior work experience?**

8 A. I am a 1993 graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a Degree in
9 Mechanical Engineering. I started my career as a performance engineer at Houston Lighting &
10 Power in Houston Texas. While working there I participated in equipment performance testing
11 activities on a number of gas-fired steam facilities, a coal facility, and several simple-cycle gas
12 turbine facilities.

13 **Q. How long have you been employed by the Company and what are your duties**
14 **as Manager, Generation Joint Projects.**

15 A. I started working for Avista in December 1996 as a mechanical production
16 engineer. In that capacity I participated in a wide variety of hydro and thermal generating station
17 projects. I joined the Energy Resources Department (Manager Generation Joint Projects) in
18 2008. My primary responsibilities in my present position involve being the corporate
19 representative for the Colstrip Generating Station and also as Avista's corporate manager
20 overseeing operations and maintenance at the Coyote Springs 2 generating station. I have also
21 worked in engineering and management capacities at all of Avista's other thermal facilities.

1 The cracks initiated from stress concentration points present in these pits. The operator (PPL
2 Montana, PPLM) followed the OEM and industry guidelines and discovered the cracks when the
3 machine was opened for inspection in 2009.

4 **Q. What is Avista's role in the planning, management and operation of the**
5 **Colstrip plant?**

6 A. Avista is a 15% owner of the Colstrip 3 and 4, twin-unit, coal fired, generating
7 facility, and is not directly involved in the day to day operations of the plant. Avista, along with
8 the other owners of the facility, and according to ownership percentage, provide oversight of the
9 facility. The operator, PPLM, carries out the daily operation of the facility, and develops the
10 detailed planning for the operation.

11 **Q. In your opinion was the Colstrip outage a result of imprudent actions?**

12 A. No. In my opinion, the outage on Unit 4 was not the result of imprudent actions.
13 The rotor on which the cracks occurred is identical to the rotors in Unit 3. The rotors were
14 installed in Unit 3 in 1995 and in Unit 4 in 1996. Both units have operated without incident until
15 the crack was discovered on Unit 4 this past year. Unit 3's rotors were fully inspected in 2007.
16 Additionally, PPLM's actions and practices were consistent with industry actions and practices
17 during, and following the 2004 event.

18 **Q. Please describe the actions the plant owners are taking to hopefully prevent a**
19 **future outage of a similar nature.**

20 A. The owners initiated a root cause analysis to address the factors that led to the
21 specific event and, thus, reduce the likelihood of a similar event in the future. As a result of the
22 root cause analysis, actions were developed. With regard to the specific failure that occurred in
23 2004, measures have been taken to physically reinforce certain condenser areas to prevent this

1 type of failure from occurring in the future. Additional actions being taken include tightening
2 the operating chemistry parameters, as well as implementing new emergency operating
3 procedures if a similar condenser event occurs. Furthermore, in order to mitigate the potential
4 for a similar outage, we have ordered a spare set of Low Pressure rotors that will be delivered in
5 2011, prior to the Unit 3 overhaul.

6 **Q. Does that conclude your pre-filed direct testimony?**

7 **A. Yes.**