

March 10, 2000

Mr. John H. Mueller
Chief Nuclear Officer
Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation
Nine Mile Point Nuclear Station
Operations Building, Second Floor
P. O. Box 63
Lycoming, NY 13093

SUBJECT: NINE MILE POINT NUCLEAR STATION, UNIT NO. 1 - COMPLETION OF LICENSING ACTION FOR BULLETIN 96-03, "POTENTIAL PLUGGING OF EMERGENCY CORE COOLING SUCTION STRAINERS BY DEBRIS IN BOILING-WATER REACTORS" (TAC NO. M96157)

Dear Mr. Mueller:

On May 6, 1996, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Bulletin (BL) 96-03, "Potential Plugging of Emergency Core Cooling Suction Strainers by Debris in Boiling-Water Reactors" to all holders of operating licenses or construction permits for boiling-water reactors (BWRs). The NRC issued BL 96-03 to ensure that the emergency core cooling systems (ECCS) in BWRs can perform their intended safety function to mitigate the effects of a postulated loss-of-coolant accident. The BL provided three options for resolving this issue including (1) installation of large capacity passive strainers, (2) installation of self-cleaning strainers, or (3) installation of a backflush system.

In BL 96-03, the NRC staff specifically requested that licensees submit the following reports for each of their facilities:

1. A description of planned actions and mitigative strategies to be used, the schedule for implementation, and proposed technical specifications, if appropriate.
2. A report confirming completion and summarizing actions taken.

In response to BL 96-03, you provided letters dated October 4, 1996; August 4, 1997; and November 25, 1997. You stated that you planned to install large capacity passive strainers which were designed using the guidance in the Boiling Water Reactors Owners Group Utility Resolution Guidance (URG). The staff reviewed the URG and issued a safety evaluation on August 20, 1998. By letter dated June 25, 1999, you informed the staff that you had completed all actions requested by the BL. These actions included:

- A. Installation of passive, large capacity ECCS suction strainers on the Core and Containment Spray Systems torus suction nozzles;
- B. Dewatering and thorough cleaning of the torus;
- C. Removal of retired-in-place containment monitoring equipment from the vent header;
- D. Thorough cleaning of the drywell; and
- E. Inspection and repair of insulation in the drywell.

The staff has reviewed your response and has determined that the actions taken should minimize the potential for clogging of ECCS suction strainers and ensure the capability of the ECCS to provide long-term cooling following a loss-of-coolant-accident as required by 10 CFR 50.46. Because the staff considers your actions responsive to the concerns raised in BL 96-03 and no plant-specific concerns have been identified, BL 96-03 is closed for Nine Mile Point, Unit 1. Detailed reviews of your strainer design and 10 CFR 50.59 evaluation may be performed on a plant-specific basis in the future.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at 301-415-1451.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Peter S. Tam, Senior Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-220

cc: See next page

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