

November 3, 2000

Mr. Ronald DeGregorio  
Vice President Oyster Creek  
AmerGen Energy Company, LLC  
P.O. Box 388  
Forked River, NJ 08731

SUBJECT: ONE CYCLE EXTENSION OF NRC APPROVAL FOR THE CORE SUPPORT  
WEDGE MODIFICATION AT THE OYSTER CREEK NUCLEAR GENERATING  
STATION (TAC NO. MA9463)

Dear Mr. DeGregorio:

By letter dated June 21, 2000, GPU Nuclear, Inc., the former licensee for the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station (Oyster Creek), requested approval for one additional cycle of operation with the core support wedge modification that was implemented during the Oyster Creek 17R refueling outage during 1998. The wedge modifications were designed and implemented consistent with the Boiling Water Reactor Vessel and Internals Project (BWRVIP-50) Report, dated May 14, 1998. By letter dated August 25, 1998, the licensee requested initial approval of the modification consistent with the BWRVIP commitments to install core support plate wedges to structurally replace the lateral resistance provided by the rim holddown bolts. By letter dated November 6, 1998, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff granted approval for one cycle of operation pending final staff review and approval of the BWRVIP-50 Report.

On the date of the June 21, 2000 letter, GPU Nuclear, Inc. (GPUN) was the licensed operator for Oyster Creek. On August 8, 2000, GPUN's ownership interest in Oyster Creek was transferred to AmerGen Energy Company, LLC (AmerGen). By letter dated August 10, 2000, AmerGen requested that the NRC continue to review and act upon all requests before the Commission which had been submitted by GPUN. Accordingly, the staff has completed its review of the request.

The NRC staff has reviewed the BWRVIP-50 Report, and the licensee's June 21, 2000, request for an additional one-cycle extension. The NRC staff has almost completed its review of the BWRVIP-50 Report. The staff has found that the BWRVIP-50 Report, as modified and clarified to incorporate the staff's comments in the staff's BWRVIP-50 safety evaluation (SE), is acceptable for providing guidance for permanent repairs of the top guide and/or core plate. This finding, based upon the information submitted in the BWRVIP-50 Report and request for additional (RAI) response, is consistent with NRC-approved methodology. Therefore, the staff has concluded that licensee implementation of the guidelines in the BWRVIP-50 Report, as modified, will provide an acceptable repair design criteria of the safety-related components addressed in the BWRVIP-50 document. Furthermore, the BWRVIP-50 Report is considered by the staff to be acceptable for licensee usage, as modified and approved by the staff, at any time during either the current operating term or during the extended license period.

Therefore, the staff finds the licensee's request for an additional one-cycle extension of the core support wedge modification to be acceptable until such time as the staff issues its SE of the BWRVIP-50 Report. Upon issuance of the staff's SE of the BWRVIP-50 Report, the licensee should review the open items contained therein, and address any items applicable to Oyster Creek in a timely manner (e.g., by the end of the next refueling outage). Also, the licensee should address any modifications to the as-revised BWRVIP-50 Report as it affects its repairs, and inform the staff of any significant deviations from the as-revised guidance.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3)(i), the staff authorizes the proposed alternative and finds that the requested action is an acceptable alternative to Section XI of the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code and provides an acceptable level of quality and safety.

If you have questions regarding this issue, please call Helen N. Pastis, Senior Project Manager at (301) 415-1261.

Sincerely,

***/RA by Patrick D. Milano for/***

Marsha Gamberoni, Chief, Section 1  
Project Directorate 1  
Division of Licensing Project Management  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-219

cc: See next page

Therefore, the staff finds the licensee's request for an additional one cycle extension of the core support wedge modification to be acceptable until such time as the staff issues its SE of the BWRVIP-50 Report. Upon issuance of the staff's SE of the BWRVIP-50 Report, the licensee should review the open items contained therein, and address any items applicable to Oyster Creek in a timely manner (e.g., by the end of the next refueling outage). Also, the licensee should address any modifications to the as-revised BWRVIP-50 Report as it affects its repairs, and inform the staff of any significant deviations from the as-revised guidance.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3)(i), the staff authorizes the proposed alternative and finds that the requested action is an acceptable alternative to Section XI of the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code and provides an acceptable level of quality and safety.

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Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station

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