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Subject: River Bend Station - Unit 1
Docket No. 50-458
License No. NPF-47
Loose Parts Monitoring System Revision

File Nos. G9.5

RBG-45641
RBF1-01-0025

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In accordance with Reg. Guide 1.133 section 3.a (2)(a), River Bend Station (RBS) is required to report changes in alert level of the Loose Parts Monitoring System (LPMS) when preexisting alert level for power operations is changed. This report identifies a change to the current maximum allowable high alarm setpoint for the LPMS channel 5 high vibration (alert) alarm.

The LPMS at River Bend Station provides detection and evaluation of metallic loose parts in the reactor coolant system from field mounted accelerometers through acoustic signals produced by loose part impact. There are a total of eight loose part monitoring channels in the LPMS. Beginning in 1999, the operating background noise levels increased for LPMS channel 5, monitoring the feedwater system, resulting in numerous rejected alarms on the LPMS computer. This condition creates an undue burden on the system by logging and saving this unnecessary data. Also, the loose parts monitoring channels share the same annunciator in the main control room. Therefore, this change will reduce the operators distraction due to unnecessary alarms.

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As described in RBS USAR Table 1.8, the River Bend Loose Parts Monitoring System complies with RBS Reg. Guide 1.133. Reg. Guide 1.133 states, "The online sensitivity of the automatic detection system should be such that, as a minimum, the system can detect a metallic loose part that weighs from 0.25 lb. to 30 lb. and impact with a kinetic energy of 0.5 ft-lb. (0.68 joules) on the inside surface of the reactor coolant pressure boundary within 3 feet of a sensor." Reg. Guide 1.133 also makes provision for a deviation from this minimum because of specific in-plant conditions.

As part of the investigation of rejected alarms, the vendor for LPMS determined that the current maximum allowable high alarm setpoint of 2.5 to 1 for the channel 5 high vibration alarm was set too low for the background noise, resulting in frequent rejected alarms. To insure that a correct loose parts signal is received, the alarm setpoint needs to be a value that is above the background noise, and yet not too high to defeat the monitoring purpose. An optimum maximum allowable high alarm setpoint was determined to be 3.0 to 1. The calculated online sensitivity for the revised maximum allowable high alarm setpoint of 3.0 to 1 is 1.93 ft-lb. This change to the high alarm setting is consistent with the guidelines of Regulatory Guide 1.133, ASME OM-S/G-1990, and RBS USAR section 4.4.6.1 "Loose Parts Monitoring System."

In summary, the LPMS provides two alarms in the control room, one for loose parts detected in the primary coolant system, and one for LPMS channel trouble. The modification was intended to improve the monitoring capability by reducing the number of rejected alarms caused by changes in the background noise and continue to comply with applicable guidance. This modification does not cause interaction with other safety related components, equipment in the area, or affect the safe operation or safe-shutdown of the plant. There are no commitments in this letter.

Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Mr. B. Burmeister at (225) 381-4148.

Sincerely,


RJK/BMB

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