



South Texas Project Electric Generating Station P.O. Box 289 Wadsworth, Texas 77483

July 19, 2001  
NOC-AE-01001129  
File No.: G09.16  
STI No. 31309910  
10CFR50.55a

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Attention: Document Control Desk  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

South Texas Project  
Unit 1  
Docket No. STN 50-498  
Commitment to Visually Examine a Detected Flaw Inside the  
Refueling Water Storage Tank (Relief Request RR-ENG-33)

Reference: "Response to NRC Safety Evaluation Regarding Refueling Water Storage Tank Leak (Relief Request RR-ENG-33)," T. J. Jordan to NRC Document Control Desk, dated February 15, 2001 (NOC-AE-01001001)

The South Texas Project previously reported a through-wall flaw discovered in the base plate of the Unit 1 Refueling Water Storage Tank. The South Texas Project, having performed and submitted a flaw evaluation to the NRC, concluded the Unit 1 Refueling Water Storage Tank remains operable without additional analysis, inspection, or repair. This position was summarized in the correspondence referenced above. However, staff reviewers have recommended that the South Texas Project perform a one-time, best-effort visual examination of the detected flaw from inside of the tank. The purpose of this examination is to confirm that the detected flaw has not grown inside the tank beyond the adjacent lap joint in the baseplate (approximately 13 inches in length).

The South Texas Project will comply with this recommendation for a visual examination prior to or during the next Unit 1 refueling outage (i.e., 1RE10 scheduled for October, 2001). It is our understanding that, should the results of this examination confirm that the detected flaw has not grown beyond the lap joint, no further analysis, inspection, or repair activity will be required with respect to the detected flaw during the service life of the Unit 1 RWST, including service life extension (if applicable), except those inspections required by the Section XI code, or approved alternative, and those required by the South Texas Project RWST Monitoring Plan. The bases for this disposition are:

- (1) the detected crack will not extend beyond the baseplate lap joint in the future if it has not already done so because the driving stress decreases rapidly with distance from the tank wall;
- (2) the RWST Monitoring Plan contained in the referenced letter will continue to be applied; and
- (3) the leakage rate will not significantly increase in the future above the current level.

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If there are any questions, please contact either Mr. M. S. Lashley at (361) 972-7523 or me at (361) 972-7902.



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