



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 5, 1998

Mr. C. K. McCoy
Vice President
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
Post Office Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

SUBJECT: ISSUANCE OF EXEMPTION TO 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4), VOGTLE ELECTRIC
GENERATING PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 (TAC NOS. MA0747 AND MA0748)

Dear Mr. McCoy:

The Commission has issued the enclosed exemption from certain requirements of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) regarding submittal of revisions to the Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR) for facility changes made under 10 CFR 50.59 for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP), Units 1 and 2. This exemption is related to your application dated January 23, 1998, to schedule updates for the VEGP Units 1 and 2 unified FSAR, once per fuel cycle (based upon the Unit 2 refueling outage schedule). With the current length of fuel cycles, FSAR updates would be submitted every 18 months, but not to exceed 24 months from the last submittal.

A copy of the Exemption and the supporting Safety Evaluation by the staff are enclosed. The Exemption is being forwarded to the Office of the Federal Register for publication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Jaffe", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David H. Jaffe, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-424 and 50-425

Enclosures: 1. Exemption
2. Safety Evaluation

cc w/encls: See next page

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March 5, 1998

Mr. C. K. McCoy
Vice President
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
Post Office Box 1295
P. O. Box 1006
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

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ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

David H. Jaffe, Senior Project Manager
Project Directorate II-2
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

1/1

Docket Nos. 50-424 and 50-425

Enclosures: 1. Exemption
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cc w/encls: See next page

*See previous concurrence

OFFICE	PDII-2/PM	PDII-2/PM	PDII-2/D	OGC*	DRPE/D(A)*	ADP(A)*	NRR/D
NAME	DJaffe	LBerry	HBerkow	CBarth	JZwolinski	BBoger	S.Collins
DATE	3/4/98	3/4/98	3/4/98	2/22/98	2/23/98	2/24/98	3/5/98

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Vogtle Electric Generating Plant

cc:

Mr. J. A. Bailey
Manager, Licensing
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
P. O. Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

Mr. J. B. Beasley
General Manager, Vogtle Electric
Generating Plant
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
P. O. Box 1600
Waynesboro, Georgia 30830

Regional Administrator, Region II
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory
Commission
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, SW., Suite 23T85
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Office of Planning and Budget
Room 615B
270 Washington Street, SW.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Mr. J. D. Woodard
Executive Vice President
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
P. O. Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

Steven M. Jackson
Senior Engineer - Power Supply
Municipal Electric Authority
of Georgia
1470 Riveredge Parkway, NW.
Atlanta, Georgia 30328-4684

Harold Reheis, Director
Department of Natural Resources
205 Butler Street, SE. Suite 1252
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Attorney General
Law Department
132 Judicial Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Mr. R. D. Barker
Program Manager
Fossil & Nuclear Operations
Oglethorpe Power Corporation
2100 East Exchange Place
P. O. Box 1349
Tucker, Georgia 30085-1349

Charles A. Patrizia, Esquire
Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker
10th Floor
1299 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20004-9500

Arthur H. Domby, Esquire
Troutman Sanders
NationsBank Plaza
600 Peachtree Street, NE.
Suite 5200
Atlanta, Georgia 30308-2216

Resident Inspector
Vogtle Plant
8805 River Road
Waynesboro, Georgia 30830

Office of the County Commissioner
Burke County Commission
Waynesboro, Georgia 30830

By letter dated January 23, 1998, the licensee requested an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4).

III.

Section 50.12(a) of 10 CFR, "Specific exemptions," states that:

The Commission may, upon application by any interested person, or upon its own initiative, grant exemptions from the requirements of the regulations of this part, which are (1) Authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and are consistent with the common defense and security. (2) The Commission will not consider granting an exemption unless special circumstances are present.

Section 50.12(a)(2)(ii) of 10 CFR states that special circumstances are present when "Application of the regulation in the particular circumstances would not serve the underlying purpose of the rule or is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule...." As noted in the staff's supporting Safety Evaluation, the licensee's proposed schedule for FSAR updates will ensure that the VEGP FSAR will be maintained current within 24 months of the last revision and the interval for submission of the 10 CFR 50.59 design change report will not exceed 24 months. The proposed schedule fits within the 24-month duration specified by 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4). Literal application of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) would require the licensee to update the same document within 6 months after a refueling outage for either unit; a more burdensome requirement than intended. Accordingly, the Commission has determined that special circumstances are present as defined in 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii). The Commission has further determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12, the exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security. The Commission hereby grants the licensee an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) to submit updates to the VEGP FSAR within 6 months of the VEGP

Unit 2 refueling outage. The licensee will be required to submit updates to the VEGP FSAR within 6 months after the Unit 2 refueling outage. With the current length of fuel cycles, FSAR updates would be submitted every 18 months, but not to exceed 24 months from the last submittal.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that the granting of this exemption will have no significant effect on the quality of the human environment (63 FR 10248).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

**Original signed by
Samuel J. Collins**

Samuel J. Collins, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Dated at Rockville, Maryland,
this 5th day of March 1998

*See previous concurrence

OFFICE	PDII-2/PM	PDII-2/D	RDII-2/D	DRPE/D (A)*	OGC*
NAME	LBerry	DJaffe	HBerkow	JZwolinski	CBarth
DATE	3/4/98	3/4/98	3/4/98	2/23/98	2/22/98
OFFICE	NRR/ADRP (A)*	NRR/D		OCIO/IMD*	
NAME	BBoger	SCollins		RSanders	
DATE	2/24/98	3/5/98		2/27/98	

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Unit 2 refueling outage. The licensee will be required to submit updates to the VEGP FSAR within 6 months after the Unit 2 refueling outage. With the current length of fuel cycles, FSAR updates would be submitted every 18 months, but not to exceed 24 months from the last submittal.

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FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION


Samuel J. Collins, Director
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Dated at Rockville, Maryland,
this 5th day of March 1998



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

EXEMPTION FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4)

UPDATES TO THE FINAL SAFETY ANALYSIS REPORT

SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY, INC., ET AL.

VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2

DOCKET NOS. 50-424 AND 50-425

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated January 23, 1998, Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc., et al. (the licensee) submitted a request for an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4), "Maintenance of records, making reports." Section 50.71(e)(4) requires, in part, that "Subsequent revisions [to the Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR)] must be filed annually or 6 months after each refueling outage provided the interval between successive updates [to the FSAR] does not exceed 24 months." The two Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) units share a common FSAR; therefore, this rule requires, literally, that the licensee update VEGP's FSAR within 6 months after a refueling outage for either unit.

2.0 EVALUATION

Section 50.71(e)(4) ensures that all licensees update their FSARs at least every refueling outage and no less frequently than every 2 years. When two units share a common FSAR, the rule has the effect of making the licensee update the FSAR roughly every 12 to 18 months. The current rule, as revised on August 31, 1992 (57 FR 39358), was intended to provide some reduction in regulatory burden by limiting the frequency of required updates. The burden reduction, however, can only be realized by single-unit facilities or multiple-unit facilities that maintain separate FSARs for each unit. For multiple-unit facilities with a common FSAR, the "each refueling outage" phrase increases rather than decreases the regulatory burden. To address this concern for multiunit plants, the authors of the revised rule stated, in response to a comment on the draft revision, that "[w]ith respect to [the] concern about multiple facilities sharing a common [U]FSAR, licensees will have maximum flexibility for scheduling updates on a case-by-case basis."

The licensee's requested exemption would permit periodic FSAR updates within 6 months of VEGP's Unit 2 refueling outage, but not to exceed 24 months from the last revision. Thus, the requirement that an update be submitted within 6 months of an outage of each unit is no longer retained. With the exemption, the VEGP FSAR will be updated and maintained current within 24 months of the last revision.

3.0 CONCLUSION

The staff finds that the proposed alternative meets the intent of the existing regulations, requiring the VEGP FSAR to be revised at least once per 24 months; therefore, the proposed exemption from 10 CFR 50.71(e)(4) for VEGP Units 1 and 2, is acceptable.

Principal Contributor: David H. Jaffe

Date: March 5, 1998