April 11, 2002

Mr. Ted C. Feigenbaum Executive Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation c/o Mr. James M. Peschel P.O. Box 300 Seabrook, NH 03874

SUBJECT: SEABROOK STATION, UNIT NO. 1 - ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT RE: ONE-TIME EXTENSION OF CONTAINMENT TYPE A LEAK TEST INTERVAL (TAC NO. MB2573)

Dear Mr. Feigenbaum:

The Commission has issued the enclosed Amendment No. 82 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-86 for the Seabrook Station, Unit No 1, in response to your application dated August 2, 2001, as supplemented on November 2, December 4, and December 19, 2001, and on January 7, 2002. This amendment will allow the licensee a one-time extension of its Appendix J, Type A, Containment Integrated Leak Rate Test (ILRT) from May 2002 to October 28, 2007, which is 15 years after the last ILRT performed after October 30, 1992. The December 4 and December 19, 2001, and the January 7, 2002, submittals did not change the scope of the original request and did not affect the staff's initial proposed finding of no significant hazards considerations or expand the scope of the <u>Federal Register</u> notice.

A copy of the related Safety Evaluation is also enclosed. Notice of Issuance will be included in the Commission's biweekly <u>Federal Register</u> notice.

Sincerely,

## /**RA**/

George F. Wunder, Project Manager, Section 2 Project Directorate I Division of Licensing Project Management Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-443

Enclosures: 1. Amendment No. 82 to NPF-86 2. Safety Evaluation

cc w/encls: See next page

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cc w/encls: See next page <u>DISTRIBUTION</u>: PUBLIC EAdensam (EGA-1) PDI-2 Rdg. JClifford GWunder TClark

OGC ACRS GHill (2) WBeckner JLinville, RGN-1 OChopra

Adams: ML020530297 \* See previous concurrence \*\*Safety Evaluation provided; no major changes made

OFFICE	PDI-2/PM	PDI-2/LA	SPLB/SC**	SPSB/SC**	EMEB/SC**	OGC*	PDI-2/SC
NAME	GWunder	TClark	RHagar	MRubin	DTerao	SBrock	JClifford
DATE	04/09/02	04/09/02	02/14/02	02/14/02	01/15/02	03/20/02	04/10/02

**OFFICIAL RECORD COPY** 

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# NORTH ATLANTIC ENERGY SERVICE CORPORATION, ET AL.\*

## DOCKET NO. 50-443

## SEABROOK STATION, UNIT NO. 1

## AMENDMENT TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE

Amendment No. 82 License No. NPF-86

- 1. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has found that:
  - A. The application for amendment filed by the North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation, et al. (the licensee), dated August 2, 2001, as supplemented on November 2, December 4, and December 19, 2001, and on January 7, 2002, complies with the standards and requirements of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act), and the Commission's rules and regulations set forth in 10 CFR Chapter I;
  - B. The facility will operate in conformity with the application, the provisions of the Act, and the rules and regulations of the Commission;
  - C. There is reasonable assurance: (i) that the activities authorized by this amendment can be conducted without endangering the health and safety of the public, and (ii) that such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations;
  - D. The issuance of this amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public; and
  - E. The issuance of this amendment is in accordance with 10 CFR Part 51 of the Commission's regulations and all applicable requirements have been satisfied.

<sup>\*</sup>North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation (NAESCO) is authorized to act as agent for the: North Atlantic Energy Corporation, Canal Electric Company, The Connecticut Light and Power Company, Great Bay Power Corporation, Hudson Light & Power Department, Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company, Little Bay Power Corporation, New England Power Company, New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc., Taunton Municipal Light Plant, The United Illuminating Company, and has exclusive responsibility and control over the physical construction, operation and maintenance of the facility.

- 2. Accordingly, the license is amended by changes to the Technical Specifications as indicated in the attachment to this license amendment, and paragraph 2.C.(2) of Facility Operating License No. NPF-86 is hereby amended to read as follows:
  - (2) Technical Specifications

The Technical Specifications contained in Appendix A, as revised through Amendment No. 82, and the Environmental Protection Plan contained in Appendix B are incorporated into Facility License No. NPF-86. NAESCO shall operate the facility in accordance with the Technical Specifications and the Environmental Protection Plan.

3. This license amendment is effective as of its date of issuance and shall be implemented within 60 days of issuance.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

#### /RA/

James W. Clifford, Chief, Section 2 Project Directorate I Division of Licensing Project Management Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Attachment: Changes to the Technical Specifications

Date of Issuance: April 11, 2002

# ATTACHMENT TO LICENSE AMENDMENT NO. 82

#### FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-86

#### DOCKET NO. 50-443

Replace the following page of the Appendix A, Technical Specifications, with the attached revised page as indicated. The revised page is identified by amendment number and contains marginal lines indicating the area of change.

Remove 6-24 <u>Insert</u> 6-24

# SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

## RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 82 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-86

## NORTH ATLANTIC ENERGY SERVICE CORPORATION

## SEABROOK STATION, UNIT NO. 1

## DOCKET NO. 50-443

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated August 2, 2001, as supplemented on November 2, December 4, and December 19, 2001, and on January 7, 2002, North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation (North Atlantic/licensee) for the Seabrook Station, Unit No. 1 (Seabrook), requested a change to Section 6.15, "Containment Leakage Rate Testing Program," of the Technical Specifications (TSs). This change would allow the licensee a one-time extension of its Appendix J, Type A, Containment Integrated Leak Rate Test (ILRT) from May 2002 to October 28, 2007, which is 15 years after the last ILRT performed after October 30, 1992. The December 4 and December 19, 2001, and the January 7, 2002, supplements did not change the scope of the original amendment request and did not affect the staff's original proposed finding of no significant hazards consideration or expand the scope of the <u>Federal Register</u> notice. The November 2, 2001, supplement was considered in the staff's original proposed finding of no significant hazards considerations.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

Option B of Appendix J to 10 CFR Part 50 requires a Type A test to be conducted at a periodic interval based on the historical performance of the overall containment system. Seabrook Station TS 6.15 requires the ILRT to be performed at a frequency in accordance with 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, Option B, as modified by approved exemptions, and in accordance with the guidelines contained in Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.163, "Performance-Based Containment Leak-Test Program," dated September 1995, as modified by approved exceptions. This regulatory guide endorses, with certain exceptions, NEI 94-01, Revision 0, "Industry Guideline for Implementing Performance-Based Option of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J," dated July 26, 1995.

A Type A test is an overall (integrated) leakage rate test of the containment structure. NEI 94-01 specifies an initial test interval of 48 months, but allows an extended interval of 10 years, based upon two consecutive successful tests. There is also a provision for extending the test interval an additional 15 months in certain circumstances. The two most recent Type A tests at Seabrook have been successful, so their current Type A leakage rate test interval is 10 years.

The licensee is requesting a change to TS 6.15, "Containment Leakage Rate Testing Program," which would indicate that they are allowed to take an exception from the Type A test interval guidelines in RG 1.163. Specifically, the proposed TS change would allow an exception to the Type A testing frequency specified in NEI 94-01, paragraph 9.2.3, such that the first Type A test performed after October 30, 1992, would be required to be performed no later than October 29, 2007. Thus, the proposed technical specification change would effectively allow a one-time extension of the current 10-year Type A test interval to a 15-year interval.

#### 3.0 EVALUATION

#### 3.1 Risk Impact

#### 3.1.1 Licensee's Basis

The licensee performed a risk impact assessment of extending the Type A test interval to 15 years. The licensee provided this assessment to the staff in its application dated August 2, 2001. The licensee provided additional information to the staff in letters dated November 2, 2001, December 4, 2001, December 19, 2001, and January 7, 2002. In performing the risk assessment, the licensee employed elements of NEI 94-01, the methodology used in EPRI TR-104285, "Risk Impact Assessment of Revised Containment Leak Rate Testing," and RG 1.174, "An Approach For Using Probabilistic Risk Assessment in Risk-Informed Decisions on Plant-Specific Changes to the Licensing Basis."

NUREG-1493, "Performance-Based Containment Leak-Test Program," dated September 1995, provides the technical basis to support rulemaking to revise leakage rate testing requirements contained in Option B of Appendix J. The basis consists of qualitative and quantitative assessments of the risk impact (in terms of increased public dose) associated with a range of extended leakage rate test intervals. To supplement the NRC's rulemaking basis, NEI undertook a similar study. The results of that study are documented in EPRI Research Project Report TR-104285.

The EPRI study used an analytical approach similar to that presented in NUREG-1493 for evaluating the incremental risk associated with increasing the interval for Type A tests. The EPRI study estimated that relaxing the test frequency from 3 in 10 years to 1 in 10 years, will increase the average time that a leak detectable only by a Type A test goes undetected from 18 to 60 months. Since Type A tests only detect about 3 percent of leaks (the rest are identified during local leak rate tests based on industry leakage rate data gathered from 1987 to 1993), this results in a 10-percent increase in the overall probability of leakage. The risk contribution of pre-existing leakage, in percent of person-rem/year, for the PWR representative plant was estimated to increase from .032 percent to .035 percent. This confirmed the NUREG-1493 conclusion that a reduction in the frequency of Type A tests from 3 per 10 years to 1 per 10 years leads to an "imperceptible" increase in risk.

Building upon the methodology of the EPRI study, the licensee assessed the change in the predicted person-rem/year frequency. The licensee quantified the leakage from sequences that have the potential to result in large releases if a pre-existing leak were present. Since the

Option B rulemaking in 1995, the staff has issued RG 1.174 on the use of probabilistic risk assessment (PRA) in risk-informed changes to a plant's licensing basis. The licensee used RG 1.174 to assess the acceptability of extending the Type A test interval beyond that established during the Option B rulemaking. RG 1.174 defines very small changes in the risk-acceptance guidelines as increases in core damage frequency (CDF) less than 10<sup>-6</sup> per reactor year and increases in large early release frequency (LERF) less than 10<sup>-7</sup> per reactor year. Since the Type A test does not impact CDF the relevant criterion is the change in LERF. The licensee has estimated the change in LERF for the proposed change and the cumulative change from the original 3 in 10 year interval. RG 1.174 also discusses defense-in-depth and encourages the use of risk analysis techniques to help ensure and show that key principles, such as the defense-in-depth philosophy, are met. The licensee estimated the change in the conditional containment failure probability to demonstrate that the defense-in-depth philosophy is met.

### 3.1.2 Staff Evaluation

The licensee provided a sensitivity analysis which estimated all of these risk metrics and whose methodology is consistent with previously approved submittals. The staff drew the following conclusions from its review of the sensitivity analysis:

- 1. A slight increase in risk is predicted when compared to that estimated from current requirements. Given the change from a 10-year test interval to a 15-year test interval, the increase in the total integrated plant risk in person-rem/year is estimated to be 0.01 percent. The increase in the total integrated plant risk, given the change from a 10-year test interval to a 15-year test interval, was found to be 0.03 percent. This is reasonable when compared to the range of risk increase, 0.02 to 0.14 percent, estimated in NUREG-1493 when going from a 3 in 10-year test interval to a 1 in 10-year interval. NUREG-1493 concluded that a reduction in the frequency of tests from 3 per 10 years to 1 per 10 years leads to an "imperceptible" increase in risk. Therefore, the increase in the total integrated plant risk for the proposed change is considered small and supportive of the proposed change.
- 2. The increase in LERF is small. RG 1.174 provides guidance for determining the risk impact of plant-specific changes to the licensing basis. RG 1.174 defines very small changes in the risk-acceptance guidelines as increases in CDF less than 10<sup>-6</sup> per reactor year and increases in LERF less than 10<sup>-7</sup> per reactor year. Since the Type A test does not impact CDF, the relevant criterion is LERF. The increase in LERF resulting from a change in the Type A test interval from 1 in 10 years to 1 in 15 years is estimated to be 5.0 x 10<sup>-8</sup>/year. The increase in LERF resulting from a change in the Type A test interval from the original 3 in 10 years to 1 in 15 years is estimated to be 1.5 x 10<sup>-7</sup>/year.

As stated before, increases in LERF of less than  $10^{-7}$  per reactor year are considered very small; increases in LERF between  $10^{-7}$  and  $10^{-6}$  per reactor year are considered small. Under the guidance of RG 1.174, changes that result in small increases in LERF are acceptable if the total LERF is less than  $10^{-5}$  per reactor year. The licensee's evaluation considered both internal and external events including fires, seismic events, and severe weather. The total LERF can be calculated by summing the Class 2 (failure to close), Class 3b (large isolation failure), Class 7a (severe accident phenomena), and Class 8 (containment bypass) sequence frequencies. The staff summed these frequencies and determined that the total LERF is  $1.2 \times 10^{-6}$  per reactor year; therefore, the licensee's

proposal to increase the Type A interval from 10 to 15 years meets the acceptance criterion of RG 1.174.

3. Defense-in-depth philosophy is maintained. RG 1.174 encourages the use of risk analysis techniques to help ensure and show that the proposed change is consistent with the defense-in-depth philosophy. Consistency with the defense-in-depth philosophy is maintained if a reasonable balance is preserved among prevention of core damage, prevention of containment failure, and consequence mitigation. The change in the conditional containment failure probability was estimated to increase by 0.001 for the proposed change and 0.0031 for the cumulative change of going from a test interval of 3 in 10 years to 1 in 15 years. RG 1.174 does not state specific numerical values for what constitutes a significant change in conditional containment failure probability; however, in the judgement of the staff the predicted 0.1% increase that would result from this change is very small and is consistent with maintaining a defense-in-depth philosophy.

From its review of the licensee's submittal the staff concluded 1) that extending the Type-A leak test frequency from 10 to 15 years would result in an increase in risk; 2) that this increase in risk is small; 3) that, given the total LERF, the increase in LERF resulting from the proposed extension is acceptable under the criteria of RG 1.174; and 4) the change does not violate the principles of defense-in-depth. Based on these conclusions, the staff finds that the increase in predicted risk due to the proposed change is within the acceptance guidelines of RG 1.174 and is, therefore, acceptable.

### 3.2 CONTAINMENT AGING AND DEGRADATION

Seabrook is a Westinghouse pressurized-water reactor with a large reinforced concrete primary containment structure. The containment pressure boundary consists of the steel liner, containment access penetrations, and process piping and electrical penetrations. The integrity of the penetrations is verified through Type B and Type C local leak rate tests (LLRT) as required by 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, and the overall integrity of the containment structure is verified through an ILRT. The leak rate testing requirements (ILRT and LLRTs) of Option B of 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J, and the containment inservice inspection (ISI) requirements mandated by 10 CFR 50.55a complement each other in ensuring the leak-tightness and structural integrity of the containment.

In its January 7, 2001, supplement the licensee stated that a comprehensive Containment Inservice Inspection Program was developed for Seabrook Class MC and CC components in accordance with the requirements of Subsections IWA, IWE and IWL of the 1995 Edition (with the 1996 Addenda) of ASME Code, Section XI ( the Code) to periodically monitor the condition of the primary containment building. In general, the areas and items subject to examination include the accessible pressure retaining containment surface areas such as structural attachments, penetrations, pressure retaining bolting, seals, gaskets, moisture barriers, and Class MC supports. These examinations are accomplished utilizing methods such as general visual examination, VT-1, VT-3, volumetric examinations, and Appendix J leakage tests. For the concrete portion of the containment, examinations in accordance with Subsection IWL are performed every 5 years. Subsection IWL requires a VT-3C visual examination of all areas and a VT-1C visual examination of suspect areas. Results of visual examination of containment concrete met VT-3C requirements. No suspect areas requiring VT-1C examination were identified. From the discussion above, the staff finds that the licensee's ISI program, including areas of augmented inspections, will provide assurance that the containment structural integrity and leak-tight integrity will be maintained during the extended ILRT period.

In a letter dated April 25, 2000, the licensee had asked for relief from certain Code requirements related to the examination of penetration seals and gaskets and the examination and testing of bolted connections associated with the primary containment pressure boundary; the licensee had proposed that these examinations be conducted during the containment leak rate test. The staff approved this relief request in a letter dated August 18, 2000. In response to the staff's request for a schedule for the examination and testing of seals, gaskets, and bolted connections that provide assurance regarding the integrity of the containment pressure boundary, the licensee stated, in its January 7, 2002, supplement, that with the approved relief request in these areas, the alternative examinations of Appendix J, Type B testing will be performed to satisfy certain containment inservice inspection requirements of Subsection IWE of ASME Code, Section XI. The licensee also stated that the extension requested for Type A testing does not affect the frequency of these alternative examinations for all penetrations except containment airlocks, airlock shaft seals, electrical penetrations, and view port seals for which the test frequency is once per 30 months. Because the extension requested for Type A testing frequency will not affect the alternative examination frequency for penetrations, and the Type B testing frequency for all penetrations meets the guidelines of NEI 94-01 and RG 1.163. the staff finds that the licensee's ISI program provides reasonable assurance that the integrity of the containment pressure boundary will be maintained during the period of the ILRT extension.

Stainless steel bellows have been found to be susceptible to trans-granular stress corrosion cracking and leakage through these bellows is not easily detectable through Type B testing. In its January 7, 2002, supplement, the licensee stated that Seabrook has one containment penetration, at the fuel transfer tube containment penetration (X-62), that incorporates a flexible stainless steel bellows assembly. This stainless steel bellows (SA-240) is a two ply unit with testable connections on either end to permit local leakage rate testing. Prior to the Type B testing, air flow is established through the bellows assembly to ensure that the entire bellows is exposed to local leakage rate test pressure in accordance with applicable penetration leak rate test procedure. The staff finds that the examination approach taken by the licensee provides reasonable assurance that the integrity of the containment pressure boundary will be maintained for this stainless steel bellows system.

In its supplement dated January 7, 2002, the licensee addressed the issue of whether or not extending the ILRT frequency would affect the ability to detect age related containment liner degradation. The licensee stated that degradation of the liner would likely not be found by ILRT unless they were virtually through-wall failures. In the judgement of the staff this is true and the extension of ILRT would not impact the likelihood of detecting this type of failure mechanism.

The staff has found that 1) historical inspections of the containment performed under Subsections IWA, IWE, and IWL of the 1995 Edition (with the 1996 Addenda) of ASME Code, Section XI, have not identified any suspect areas; 2) the extension requested for Type A testing frequency will not affect the alternative examination frequency for penetrations, and the Type B testing frequency for all penetrations meets the guidelines of NEI 94-01 and RG 1.163; 3) the licensee's examination approach provides reasonable assurance of maintaining the integrity of the containment pressure boundary for this stainless steel bellows system; and 4) the extension of the ILRT is not likely to affect the detection of containment liner degradation. -6-

Based on these findings, the staff has concluded that the extension of the ILRT from 10 to 15 years is not likely to affect the licensee's ability to detect overall containment degradation.

## 4.0 SUMMARY

In its review of the licensee's submittal the staff has concluded that 1) the risk associated with the proposed extension of the ILRT from 10 to 15 years is small, 2) the increase in risk due to the extension of the ILRT is within the guidelines of RG 1.174, 3) the philosophy of defense-indepth will be maintained after the extension of the ILRT, and 4) the ability of the licensee's inservice inspection program to detect containment degradation is not likely to be affected by the extension of the ILRT. Based on the foregoing evaluation, the staff finds that the interval until the next Type A test at Seabrook may be extended to 15 years, and that the proposed change to TS 6.15 is acceptable.

#### 5.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the New Hampshire and Massachusetts State officials were notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State officials had no comments.

## 6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendment changes a requirement with respect to installation or use of a facility component located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. The NRC staff has determined that the amendment involves no significant increase in the amounts, and no significant change in the types, of any effluents that may be released offsite, and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has previously issued a proposed finding that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (66 FR 64298). Accordingly, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendment.

#### 7.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

Principal Contributors: J. Lehning M. Snodderly T. Cheng

Date: April 11, 2002