

MEMORANDUM TO: Chairman Meserve
Commissioner Dicus
Commissioner Diaz
Commissioner McGaffigan
Commissioner Merrifield

FROM: William D. Travers
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: ISSUANCE OF ORDER REGARDING RESPONSE TO NUCLEAR
REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC) BULLETIN 2001-01,
"CIRCUMFERENTIAL CRACKING OF REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL
HEAD PENETRATION NOZZLES"

On November 21, 2001, I forwarded a memorandum informing you of the staff's intention to issue an immediately effective Order to FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company (FENOC) modifying the operating license for Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station, Unit No. 1. The Order would have required FENOC to cease power operations by December 31, 2001, and bring the unit to cold shutdown to perform inspection of vessel head penetration (VHP) nozzles.

The staff hosted a public meeting on November 28, 2001, with FENOC representatives as part of its ongoing efforts associated with the review of their Bulletin 2001-01 responses. The licensee provided additional information, including its revised probabilistic safety assessment. On November 30, 2001, FENOC documented this additional information and committed to the following: (1) shutdown Davis-Besse by February 16, 2002, for the commencement of the refueling outage; (2) perform 100% qualified visual inspection and non-destructive examination of VHP nozzles, and characterization of flaws through destructive examination, should cracks be detected; (3) reduce reactor coolant system hot leg temperature from 605°F to 598°F for the remainder of the operating cycle; (4) maximize the availability of the plant's redundant critical safety systems by minimizing on-line maintenance and testing of these systems; and (5) providing increased human factors reliability through additional training and dedicated personnel.

Based on the additional information provided and FENOC's commitments outlined above, it is the staff's judgment that sufficient information is available to justify operation of the Davis-Besse facility until February 16, 2002.

The staff's decision was documented in a letter dated December 4, 2001, to FENOC, and communicated in a telephone call with Davis-Besse management.

cc: SECY
OGC
OCA
OPA

CONTACT: Jacob Zimmerman, NRR
415-2426

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