

December 02, 2002

Mr. Harold W. Keiser
Chief Nuclear Officer & President
PSEG Nuclear LLC - X04
Post Office Box 236
Hancocks Bridge, NJ 08038

SUBJECT: SALEM NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNIT NOS. 1 AND 2 -
RESPONSE TO NRC BULLETIN 2002-02, "REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL
HEAD AND VESSEL HEAD PENETRATION NOZZLE INSPECTION
PROGRAMS" (TAC NOS. MB5919 AND MB5920)

Dear Mr. Keiser:

On August 9, 2002, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Bulletin 2002-02, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head and Vessel Head Penetration Nozzle Inspection Programs." The Bulletin requested addressees to provide information related to their reactor pressure vessel (RPV) head and vessel head penetration (VHP) nozzle inspection programs for their respective facilities, including a summary discussion of inspection program plans to supplement their required visual inspections with nonvisual nondestructive examination methods, or justification for reliance on visual examinations as the primary method to detect degradation. Addressees were requested to respond to Item (1) of the Bulletin within 30 days of its issuance, or within 15 days of its issuance, to provide an alternative course of action, including the basis for acceptability of the proposed action.

By letter dated September 6, 2002, PSEG Nuclear LLC (PSEG) provided a response to Item (1) of the Bulletin, indicating the plans to perform RPV head and VHP nozzle inspections at the Salem Nuclear Generating Station, Unit Nos. 1 and 2 (Salem). The response also indicated that the two Salem units are in the category of plants considered to have moderate susceptibility to RPV head and VHP cracking, based on a susceptibility ranking between 8 and 12 effective degradation years.

The NRC staff has reviewed your response to Item (1) of the Bulletin. The staff finds the 100% bare metal visual (BMV) examination conducted during Salem, Unit No. 1 refueling outage 1R15, that began on October 12, 2002, to provide reasonable assurance of adequate protection of public health and safety. In addition, the staff has determined that your plans to perform a 100% BMV examination at Salem, Unit No. 2 during refueling outage 2R13, that is scheduled to begin in October 2003, to be likewise acceptable.

The staff notes that you anticipate conducting future inspections consistent with that proposed in the example matrix from the Bulletin; however, you indicate that you will provide your future inspection plans at a later date. You are requested to provide your future inspection plans in accordance with Item (1)A. or (1)B. of the Bulletin, as appropriate, no later than 90 days prior to the start of 1R16 for Salem, Unit No. 1, and 2R14 for Salem, Unit No. 2. The staff's assessment of the adequacy of your long-term inspection program will be determined upon completion of a review at that time.

H. Keiser

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Also, please note that as stated in Item (2) of the Bulletin, you are to report your inspection scope and results to the Commission within 30 days after plant restart following the inspection of the RPV head and VHP nozzles.

Please contact me at (301) 415-1324 if you have any questions on this issue.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Robert J. Fretz, Project Manager, Section 2
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-272 and 50-311

cc: See next page

H. Keiser

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Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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Unit Nos. 1 and 2

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