

December 12, 2002

Mr. Paul D. Hinnenkamp
Vice President - Operations
Entergy Operations, Inc.
River Bend Station
P.O. Box 220
St. Francisville, LA 70775

SUBJECT: RIVER BEND STATION, UNIT 1 - ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENT
RE: CONTROL ROD TESTING FREQUENCY (TAC NO. MB5678)

Dear Mr. Hinnenkamp:

The Commission has issued the enclosed Amendment No. 126 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-47 for the River Bend Station, Unit 1. The amendment consists of changes to the Technical Specifications (TSs) in response to your application dated July 10, 2002.

The amendment authorizes an extension in the surveillance testing interval for the control rods from 120 days cumulative operation in Mode 1 to 200 days cumulative operation in Mode 1.

A copy of our related Safety Evaluation is enclosed. The Notice of Issuance will be included in the Commission's next biweekly *Federal Register* notice.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Michael Webb, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate IV
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-458

Enclosures: 1. Amendment No. 126 to NPF-47
2. Safety Evaluation

cc w/encls: See next page

River Bend Station

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ENERGY GULF STATES, INC. **

AND

ENERGY OPERATIONS, INC.

DOCKET NO. 50-458

RIVER BEND STATION, UNIT 1

AMENDMENT TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE

Amendment No. 126
License No. NPF-47

1. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has found that:
 - A. The application for amendment by Entergy Gulf States, Inc.* (the licensee) dated July 10, 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, as amended, 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 license amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public; and

* Entergy Operations, Inc. is authorized to act as agent for Entergy Gulf States, Inc., and has exclusive responsibility and control over the physical construction, operation and maintenance of the facility.

**Entergy Gulf States, Inc., has merged with a wholly owned subsidiary of Entergy Corporation. Entergy Gulf States, Inc., was the surviving company in the merger.

- E. The issuance of this amendment is in accordance with Part 51, "Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Related Regulatory Functions" of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) and all applicable requirements have been satisfied.
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-47 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- (2) Technical Specifications and Environmental Protection Plan
- The Technical Specifications contained in Appendix A, as revised through Amendment No. 126 and the Environmental Protection Plan contained in Appendix B, are hereby incorporated in the license. EOI shall operate the facility in accordance with the Technical Specifications and the Environmental Protection Plan.
3. The license amendment is effective as of its date of issuance and shall be implemented within 60 days from the date of issuance.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

/RA/

Robert A. Gramm, Chief, Section 1
Project Directorate IV
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Attachment: Changes to the Technical
Specifications

Date of Issuance: December 12, 2002

ATTACHMENT TO LICENSE AMENDMENT NO. 126

FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-47

DOCKET NO. 50-458

Replace the following pages of the Appendix A Technical Specifications with the attached revised pages. The revised pages are identified by Amendment number and contain marginal lines indicating the areas of change.

Remove

Insert

3.1-12

3.1-12

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 126 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-47

ENERGY OPERATIONS, INC.

RIVER BEND STATION, UNIT 1

DOCKET NO. 50-458

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By application dated July 10, 2002, Entergy Operations, Inc. (Entergy or the licensee) requested changes to the Technical Specifications (TSs) (Appendix A to Facility Operating License No. NPF-47) for the River Bend Station, Unit 1 (RBS). The proposed changes would revise the TSs to extend the testing interval for the control rods from 120 days cumulative operation in Mode 1 to 200 days cumulative operation in Mode 1.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The TS governing the control rod scram time surveillance are intended to assure proper function of control rod insertion. Following each refueling outage, all control rod scram times are verified. In addition, periodically during power operation, randomly selected control rods are to be partially inserted to verify the insertion speed. The TS stipulates that no more than 10 percent of the control rods can be "slow" during the post outage testing. The licensee has set the acceptance criterion for at-power surveillance at 7.5 percent of the total control rods exceeding the scram time specified limit.

3.0 EVALUATION

Over the course of the operating life of RBS, the control rod insertion time test results have shown the control rod scram rates to be highly reliable. During 15 years of operation, out of 3,893 control rod insertion tests, only two control rods have been slower than the insertion time limit. In addition, there have been no inoperable control rods. The extensive historical database substantiates the claim of high reliability of the RBS control rod drive system. The current TS requires that 10 percent of the 145 control rods, or 15 rods, be tested via random sampling every 120 cumulative days of operation in Mode 1. Entergy has requested extension of the surveillance interval to 200 cumulative days of operation in Mode 1.

The current TS states that the acceptance criteria have been met if 20 percent or fewer of the random sample control rods that are tested are found to be slow. Entergy has proposed that the slow insertion time control rod acceptance criteria be reduced to 7.5 percent of the random sample when the surveillance period is extended to 200 cumulative days of operation in Mode 1.

The staff considers the extended surveillance interval to be justified by the demonstrated reliability of the RBS control rod insertion system, based on historical control rod scram time test data, and by the more restrictive acceptance criterion for the number of slow rods allowed during at-power surveillance testing. The staff finds the proposed TS change to be acceptable.

4.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC or the Commission) regulations, the Louisiana State official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

5.0 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 (67 FR 58641, published September 17, 2002). 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.

6.0 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 Contributor: R. Landry

Date: December 12, 2002

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Mr. Paul D. Hinnenkamp
Vice President - Operations
Entergy Operations, Inc.
River Bend Station
P. O. Box 220
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Michael Webb, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate IV
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