

October 18, 2004

Mr. L. William Pearce
Vice President
FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company
Beaver Valley Power Station
Post Office Box 4
Shippingport, PA 15077

SUBJECT: BEAVER VALLEY POWER STATION, UNIT NO. 2 (BVPS-2) - RESPONSE TO NRC BULLETIN 2003-02, "LEAKAGE FROM REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL LOWER HEAD PENETRATIONS AND REACTOR COOLANT PRESSURE BOUNDARY INTEGRITY" (TAC NO. MC0522)

Dear Mr. Pearce:

On August 21, 2003, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued NRC Bulletin 2003-02, "Leakage from Reactor Pressure Vessel Lower Head Penetrations and Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary Integrity," to the industry. This Bulletin informed addressees that current methods of inspecting the reactor pressure vessel (RPV) lower heads may need to be supplemented with bare-metal visual (BMV) inspections in order to detect reactor coolant pressure boundary leakage and requested these addressees provide the NRC with information related to inspections that have been performed to verify the integrity of the RPV lower-head penetrations.

The Bulletin requested that addressees provide a description of the RPV lower-head penetration inspection program that would be implemented at their respective plants during the next and subsequent refueling outages. This description was to include the extent of the inspection, the inspection methods to be used, the qualification standards for the inspection methods, the process used to resolve the source of findings of boric acid deposits or corrosion, the inspection documentation to be generated, and the basis for concluding that their plant satisfied applicable regulatory requirements related to the structural and leakage integrity of the RPV lower-head penetrations.

By letter dated September 19, 2003, FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company (FENOC) provided its response to this request. FENOC indicated it planned to perform a 360-degree BMV examination of all 50 RPV lower-head penetrations during the fall 2003 refueling outage at BVPS-2. In its response, FENOC also committed to perform a 360-degree BMV examination of these 50 penetrations during subsequent refueling outages at BVPS-2 until a change to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers *Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code* or a regulatory action justifies a change in the examination frequency or method. As such, FENOC is requested to notify the NRC staff in writing of any changes to this commitment prior to implementation.

The Bulletin also requested that addressees provide a summary of the RPV lower-head penetration inspection that was performed at their plants, the extent of the inspection and the methods used, a description of the as-found condition of the lower head, any findings of

L. Pearce

-2-

relevant indications of through-wall leakage, and a summary of the disposition of any findings of boric acid deposits and any corrective actions taken as a result of indications found.

By letter dated December 2, 2003, FENOC provided a summary of its inspection results at BVPS-2. FENOC reported it had performed a 360-degree BMV examination of the 50 RPV lower-head penetrations with no evidence of penetration leakage observed.

The NRC has completed its review of FENOC's responses to NRC Bulletin 2003-02. Based on its review, the NRC staff finds that FENOC has met the reporting requirements of the Bulletin. Accordingly, TAC No. MC0552 is closed for BVPS-2.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Timothy G. Colburn, Senior Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-412

cc: See next page

L. Pearce

-2-

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Timothy G. Colburn, Senior Project Manager, Section 1
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