

November 22, 2004

Dennis L. Koehl
Site Vice President
Point Beach Nuclear Plant
Nuclear Management Company, LLC
6590 Nuclear Road
Two Rivers, WI 54241

SUBJECT: POINT BEACH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 - RESPONSE TO NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC) BULLETIN 2003-02, "LEAKAGE FROM REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL LOWER HEAD PENETRATIONS AND REACTOR COOLANT PRESSURE BOUNDARY INTEGRITY" (TAC NOS. MC0556 AND MC0557)

Dear Mr. Koehl:

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 inspections in order to detect reactor coolant pressure boundary leakage. The bulletin also requested these addressees to 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 22, 2003, Nuclear Management Company, LLC (NMC) provided its response to this request. As part of its response, NMC committed to perform a 100 percent bare-metal visual inspection of the lower RPV dome, including each bottom-mounted instrumentation to RPV junction, during future refueling outages at Point Beach Nuclear Plant (PBNP), Units 1 and 2. NMC also stated it would continue to perform this inspection until either industry experience, changes to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Code, or changes to the regulatory requirements justify a change to the examination frequency. As such, NMC is requested to notify the NRC staff in writing of any changes to this regulatory 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 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 January 15, 2004, NMC provided a summary of its inspection results at PBNP, Unit 2. NMC reported it had performed a 360-degree bare-metal visual examination on all 36 bottom-mounted instrumentation penetrations. Additionally, the adjacent bare metal of the RPV lower head was inspected up to 6 inches above the highest bottom-mounted instrumentation penetration. NMC did not observe any evidence of bottom-mounted instrumentation penetration leakage.

By letter dated August 6, 2004, NMC provided a summary of its inspection results at PBNP, Unit 1. NMC reported it had performed a 360-degree bare-metal visual examination on all 36 bottom-mounted instrumentation penetrations. Additionally, the adjacent bare metal of the RPV lower head was inspected up to 6 inches above the highest bottom-mounted instrumentation penetration. NMC did not observe any evidence of bottom-mounted instrumentation penetration leakage.

Based on its review of NMC's responses to NRC Bulletin 2003-02, the NRC staff finds that NMC has met the reporting requirements of the bulletin. Accordingly, TAC Nos. MC0556 and MC0557 are closed for PBNP, Units 1 and 2, respectively.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Harold Chernoff, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate III
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-266 and 50-301

cc: See next page

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By letter dated August 6, 2004, NMC provided a summary of its inspection results at PBNP, Unit 1. NMC reported it had performed a 360-degree bare-metal visual examination on all 36 bottom-mounted instrumentation penetrations. Additionally, the adjacent bare metal of the RPV lower head was inspected up to 6 inches above the highest bottom-mounted instrumentation penetration. NMC did not observe any evidence of bottom-mounted instrumentation penetration leakage.

Based on its review of NMC's responses to NRC Bulletin 2003-02, the NRC staff finds that NMC has met the reporting requirements of the bulletin. Accordingly, TAC Nos. MC0556 and MC0557 are closed for PBNP, Units 1 and 2, respectively.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Harold Chernoff, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate III
Division of Licensing Project Management
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