



Serial: RNP-RA/05-0072

JUL 20 2005

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
 Attn: Document Control Desk
 Washington, DC 20555-0001

H. B. ROBINSON STEAM ELECTRIC PLANT, UNIT NO. 2
 DOCKET NO. 50-261/LICENSE NO. DPR-23

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM 10 CFR 72.212
 AND 10 CFR 72.214 - SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In a letter dated June 13, 2005, Progress Energy Carolinas, Inc. (PEC), also known as Carolina Power and Light Company, requested an exemption from requirements specified in 10 CFR 72.212, "Conditions of general license issued under §72.210," and 10 CFR 72.214, "List of approved spent fuel storage casks," for H. B. Robinson Steam Electric Plant (HBRSEP), Unit No. 2. The exemption would allow PEC to store fuel in the NUHOMS® - 24PTH model cask, using the proposed Amendment No. 8, prior to the effective date of the final rule change to 10 CFR 72.214 to add this model cask to the listing for Certificate of Compliance (CoC) No. 1004. CoC No. 1004 is issued to Transnuclear, Inc., (TN) for the Standardized NUHOMS® System.

Subsequent to the submittal of the June 13, 2005 letter, a technical issue has been identified related to proposed Amendment No. 8 to CoC No. 1004. The issue is related to the potential for air (including oxygen) to come in contact with the fuel cladding during the Dry Shielded Canister (DSC) draining or vacuum drying evolutions. Proposed Technical Specification 1.2.17c, "24PTH DSC Vacuum Drying Duration Limit," currently allows for air, nitrogen, or helium as the drying blowdown medium. Additionally, procedural steps in the Amendment No. 8 Final Safety Analysis Report do not specify the use of an inert cover gas while draining water out of the DSC to levels below the fuel cladding. The potential for air to come in contact with the fuel cladding during these evolutions has not been analyzed sufficiently for the potential negative effects of cladding oxidation.

To resolve this issue at HBRSEP, Unit No. 2, PEC commits to incorporate procedural controls to ensure that: 1) only nitrogen or helium will be used for blowdown during vacuum drying evolutions, and 2) when draining water from the DSC at or below the level of the fuel cladding, a nitrogen or helium cover gas will be used. This commitment will remain in effect during dry fuel storage evolutions performed pursuant to the requested exemption.

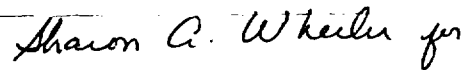
Progress Energy Carolinas, Inc.
 Robinson Nuclear Plant
 3581 West Entrance Road
 Hartsville, SC 29550

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This supplemental commitment imposes additional controls and limitations to eliminate the potential cladding oxidation issue. The procedures that will be used remain consistent with the requirements of the proposed Amendment No. 8. Therefore, the justification for the requested exemption, including the environmental assessment, provided in the June 13, 2005 letter, remain valid.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. C. T. Baucom at (843) 857-1253.

Sincerely,



Jan F. Lucas

Manager – Support Services – Nuclear

RAC/rac

- c: NRC Resident Inspector, HBRSEP
- Dr. W. D. Travers, NRC, Region II
- Mr. J. R. Hall, NRC, NMSS, SFPO
- Mr. L. R. Wharton, NRC, NMSS, SFPO
- Mr. C. P. Patel, NRC, NRR