

May 22, 2006

Mr. Glen R. Mills
P.O. Box 3393
Mission Viejo, CA 92690

SUBJECT: SAN ONOFRE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION GRID OPERATOR
CONCERNS

Dear Mr. Mills:

I am writing in response to your letters of November 28, 2004, and March 17, 2006. We have reviewed your recommendation that the grid operators should be a combination of reactor operators (ROs) and senior reactor operators (SROs) and find that we do not support it. The grid operators do not control the nuclear power plant (NPP) operations as stated in your letter. Thus, there is no reason for the grid operators to be NRC licensed RO's and SRO's. Further, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has no jurisdiction over the grid and grid operators. Therefore, the NRC does not control the qualifications of electric grid operators, who interface with commercial power reactors. The Energy Act of 2005 established a new Electric Reliability Organization (ERO) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) providing oversight for assuring grid reliability. FERC is an independent Federal agency that regulates the interstate transmission and sale of electricity, natural gas, and oil.

The NRC staff is very cognizant of the close cooperation needed between the grid operators and the NPP operators for ensuring that reliable offsite power is available to the NPP at all times. The Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation recently issued a Generic Letter (GL) 2006-2 dated February 1, 2006, on this subject to seek information from our licensees on the communication interfaces and protocols between the NPPs and the grid operators. The NRC staff will evaluate the responses to this GL and take appropriate actions to maintain power plant safety. If you should have any additional questions or comments, please contact Mr. Paul Gill of my staff at (301) 415-3316.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Michael E. Mayfield
Director, Division of Engineering,
Office of Nuclear Reactor Programs

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Michael E. Mayfield
Director, Division of Engineering,
Office of Nuclear Reactor Programs

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