

October 20, 2006

MEMORANDUM TO: File

FROM: Mahesh Chawla, Project Manager, Section 1 */RA/*  
Plant Licensing Branch III-1  
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing

SUBJECT: PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 -  
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS EXTENSION OF RELIEF  
REQUESTS 2 AND 3 FOR THE FOURTH 10-YEAR INSERVICE  
TESTING PROGRAM INTERVAL (TAC NOS. MD3123 AND MD3124)

On September 21, 2006, a conference call was held between the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff and the representatives of Nuclear Management Company (NMC)(the licensee), to discuss the status of an interim relief granted until September 30, 2006, to Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2, for Relief Requests 2 and 3 associated with the fourth 10-year inservice testing interval.

In a letter dated June 28, 2004, NMC requested relief for Diesel-driven cooling water pumps 12 and 22, and motor-driven cooling water pump 121. Relief was requested from ISTB-3550, which requires that a rate or quantity meter be installed in each of the pump test circuits. If a meter does not indicate the flow directly, the record shall include the method used to reduce the data. The Licensee proposed alternative pump testing using non-instrumented bypass lines that feed a jacket cooler and a gear oil cooler. Additional unmetered flow feeds the chemical treatment, and filtered water system.

In a letter dated July 25, 2005, the staff evaluated these alternate methods and concluded that the bypass lines are not fixed resistance systems and fouling of the associated equipment could change the resistance of the bypass lines and potentially mask pump degradation. Long-term relief could not be granted due to the lack of information in the relief request explaining how the testing will account for potential masking of degrading flow rates.

However, interim relief was granted pursuant to 10CFR50.55a(f)(6)(i) based on the impracticality of the design and the burden that would result if the Code requirements were immediately imposed, such as a plant shutdown because testing in accordance with the Code could not be performed. The staff also concluded that the current test method will identify significant degrading trends for an interim period, providing an adequate level of assurance of the operational readiness of the pumps.

The staff further concluded that granting relief would not endanger life or property or the common defense and security and was otherwise in the public interest, giving due consideration to the burden upon the licensee that could result if the requirements were imposed on the facility. The licensee was requested to respond prior to September 30, 2006, to inform the staff of actions taken to achieve compliance with the code requirements. The licensee responded in

a letter dated September 19, 2006, and requested an extension of the interim relief for Relief Requests 2 and 3 until May 30, 2007. The reason for the teleconference was to request a verbal approval of an extension for Relief Requests 2 and 3 until May 30, 2007.

The licensee determined that a modification to the system piping was necessary to comply with the Code requirements. Implementation of the modification was originally planned so that the requirements of the Code could be met prior to the expiration of the interim relief period. However, the licensee recently identified that some components received for the modification do not reflect parameters assumed in the modification design and therefore, portions of the modification require re-analysis that will delay installation of the modification. Additionally, the onset of colder weather will decrease plant cooling water loads, thus making it difficult to achieve adequate flows for the required pump tests.

The licensee requested an extension of interim Relief Requests 2 and 3 until May 30, 2007, to allow completion of the modification and to allow testing during a period of higher cooling water loads. The staff has determined that the proposed extension to May 30, 2007, of interim Relief Requests 2 and 3 is acceptable based on the time frame required to complete installation of the modification package and to allow testing of the pumps during a period of higher cooling water loads. The current test method will continue to identify any significant degrading trends during the extension period, which will provide an adequate level of assurance of the operational readiness of the pumps. Verbal relief was granted to Prairie Island Unit 1 and 2, during the telephone conference on September 21, 2006.

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