March 21, 2007

Mr. Randall K. Edington
Senior Vice President, Nuclear
Mail Station 7602
Arizona Public Service Company
P. O. Box 52034
Phoenix, AZ 85072-2034

SUBJECT: PALO VERDE NUCLEAR GENERATING STATION, UNITS 1, 2, AND 3 - CORRECTION TO ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS RE: CONTAINMENT ISOLATION VALVES (TAC NOS. MD0044, MD0045, AND MD0046)

Dear Mr. Edington:

The Commission issued Amendment No. 166 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-41, Amendment No. 166 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-51, and Amendment No. 166 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-74 for the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, Units 1, 2, and 3, respectively. The amendments consisted of changes to the Technical Specifications (TSs) in response to your application dated February 14, 2006.

The amendments revised the Limiting Condition for Operation for TS 3.6.3, "Containment Isolation Valves," and associated Actions and Surveillance Requirements to allow a blind flange to be used for containment isolation in each of two flow paths of the 42-inch refueling purge valves in Modes 1 through 4, without remaining in TS 3.6.3 Condition D.

Page 3 of the safety evaluation (SE) incorrectly cited the blind flange as being "2 inches" from the outer containment wall, when the actual distance is approximately two feet. This error does not change the staff's conclusions regarding Amendment No. 166. Enclosed is a corrected version of page 3 of the SE, with the correction denoted by a vertical bar. Please discard the associated page from the previous SE and replace it with the enclosed page.

If you have any questions, please call me at (301) 415-3062.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Mel B. Fields, Senior Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch IV
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. STN 50-528, STN 50-529,
and STN 50-530

Enclosures: As stated

cc w/encls: See next page

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when blind flanges are installed. The proposed changes do not modify any other categorization of valves and/or penetrations that serve the purpose of containment integrity, as described in NUREG-1432, “Standard Technical Specifications Combustion Engineering Plants.”

The refueling purge system is designed for intermittent operation during Modes 5 and 6, as a means of removing airborne radioactivity, thereby allowing for personnel entry into containment. During operations (Modes 1 through 4), the purge valves would be in the closed position. The blind flanges would replace the isolation function provided by the outboard purge valves (outside containment) and serve as the containment pressure boundary. The blind flanges have a double, concentric O-ring surface with provisions for testing to meet containment leak testing requirements. As such, no single credible failure or malfunction of the blind flange mechanism would be expected to affect limits assumed in the safety analysis. The licensee proposes to verify performance in accordance with TS SR 3.6.1.1 and TS 5.5.16. Because the blind flanges will provide comparable containment isolation to that assumed for the 42-inch refueling purge valves, the proposed changes do not impact the UFSAR accident analysis. The blind flanges will be located approximately two feet from the outer containment wall and are, therefore, consistent with the General Design Criteria (GDC) 56, “Primary containment isolation,” in being as close as practical to the containment wall.

Current TS 3.6.3 Action D allows for the use of a blind flange to isolate a purge valve flow path when one or both of the purge valves is not within leakage limits. The proposed change will allow the use of blind flanges to be used for containment isolation in each of the 42-inch purge lines without relying on the valves or remaining in the TS-required Action. The blind flanges will provide containment integrity, and therefore, satisfy the criteria in 10 CFR 50.36(c)(2(ii)(C). The blind flanges meet 10 CFR, Appendix A, GDC 16, “Containment design,” GDC 51, “Fracture prevention of containment pressure boundary,” GDC 52, “Capability for containment leakage rate testing,” and GDC 53, “Provisions for containment testing and inspection.” When blind flanges are installed, the 42-inch purge flow path is not required to be tested in accordance with GDC 54, “Piping systems penetrating containment,” and the isolation requirements of GDC 56. The licensee plans to test the blind flanges for the 42-inch purge valves in accordance with 10 CFR Part 50, Appendix J.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee’s proposed use of the blind flanges and finds that they comply with the regulatory requirements. The proposed changes to the TSs to accomplish this are consistent with 10 CFR 50.36.

4.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the Arizona State official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendments change requirements with respect to installation or use of a facility component located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20 and change surveillance requirements. The NRC staff has determined that the amendments involve no significant increase in the amounts and no significant change in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative