

April 29, 2007

Mr. J. A. Stall
Senior Vice President, Nuclear and
Chief Nuclear Officer
Florida Power and Light Company
P.O. Box 14000
Juno Beach, Florida 33408-0420

SUBJECT: ST. LUCIE, UNIT 1 - PRESSURIZER SURGE, SPRAY, SAFETY, AND RELIEF
NOZZLE WELD SUSCEPTIBILITY TO PRIMARY WATER STRESS
CORROSION CRACKING (TAC NO. MD4177)

Dear Mr. Stall:

This letter acknowledges the receipt of information from Florida Power and Light Company (FPL or the licensee) pertaining to the pressurizer surge, spray, safety, and relief nozzle and safe end welds at the St. Lucie Nuclear Plant, Unit 1.

The discovery, in October 2006, of five circumferential indications in three Alloy 82/182 dissimilar metal (DM) welds on the pressurizer at the Wolf Creek Generating Station (Wolf Creek) raised safety concerns based on the size and location of the indications. At Wolf Creek, three indications were in the pressurizer surge nozzle-to-safe end weld, and two separate indications were in the safety and relief nozzle-to-safe end welds. These findings also indicated that significant concerns might exist with the inspection schedules for addressing the pressurizer weld concerns issued by the industry-sponsored Materials Reliability Program (MRP) contained in "Primary System Piping Butt Weld Inspection and Evaluation Guideline (MRP-139)."

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is concerned about the pressurizer surge nozzle-to-safe end weld indications, as this is the first time that multiple circumferential primary water stress-corrosion cracking (PWSCC) indications have been identified in a weld. This condition calls into question the degree of safety margin present in past structural integrity evaluations for flawed DM welds susceptible to PWSCC, since multiple stress-corrosion cracking flaws may grow independently and ultimately grow together, significantly reducing the time from flaw initiation to leakage or rupture.

Based on discussions with the NRC staff, licensees of plants susceptible to this condition have committed to enhanced inspection frequency and reactor coolant system leakage monitoring until actions to mitigate the potential of PWSCC in the affected welds have been completed.

J. A. Stall

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In your letter dated January 31, 2007, you stated that the pressurizer at St. Lucie Unit 1 has been replaced with a component that uses PWSCC resistant materials and does not incorporate Alloy 82/182 butt welds. As a result, your response adequately addresses the concerns that the NRC has at this time regarding PWSCC susceptibility of these welds. This completes the NRC staff's efforts on TAC No. MD4177.

If you have any questions, please contact Brenda Mozafari at (301) 415-2020.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Catherine Haney, Director
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-335
License No. DPR-67

cc: See next page

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