



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

REGION II
SAM NUNN ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET, SW, SUITE 23T85
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8931

November 9, 2007

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
ATTN: Mr. J. Randy Johnson
Vice President - Farley
Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant
7388 North State Highway 95
Columbia, AL 36319

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT FOLLOW-UP LETTER - JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT

Dear Mr. Johnson:

In October 2007, as part of our quarterly review, the NRC staff completed an update of our assessment of the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant. The assessment evaluated performance indicators (PIs) and inspection results. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our assessment of your safety performance during this period and our plans for additional inspections. This letter supplements, but does not supercede, our annual and mid-cycle assessment letters.

Our review determined that the Unit 1 Mitigating System Performance Index, Cooling Water Systems PI has crossed the threshold from Green to White. This resulted from the additional unplanned unavailability time that occurred when breakers in the Component Cooling Water system failed to close on two separate occasions.

On August 17, 2007, we completed a supplemental inspection for a previous White Mitigating System Performance Index, Cooling Water Systems PI primarily due to Service Water pump breaker failures. During that inspection we identified significant weaknesses relating to the thoroughness and quality of several root cause evaluations that challenged your ability to implement effective overall corrective actions. Therefore, in accordance with Inspection Manual Chapter 0305, Operating Reactor Assessment Program, a White parallel PI inspection finding was opened to allow for additional review of your actions. This White parallel PI inspection finding is applicable to both Units 1 and 2 and will remain open until you have notified us of your readiness for the NRC to review the actions taken to address these issues and reverse the adverse trend in the performance and reliability of safety-related breakers.

As a result of the additional White PI on Unit 1 and the White parallel PI inspection finding, we have assessed Unit 1 performance to be in the Degraded Cornerstone column (two White inputs into the Mitigating System Cornerstone) of the NRC's Action Matrix.

For Unit 2, a Yellow inspection finding and Notice of Violation was issued on October 31, 2007, for the failure of a Residual Heat Removal (RHR) containment sump suction valve to fully open on two separate occasions. Because this finding was first provided to you in a letter dated August 2, 2007, this finding is being used for performance assessment in the NRC's Action Matrix in our quarterly review. As such, this Yellow finding would place Unit 2 in the Degraded Cornerstone column (one Yellow input into the Mitigating System Cornerstone) of the NRC's Action Matrix.

Two additional inputs were also applicable to our review of Unit 2. As previously noted in our mid-cycle assessment letter, the Unit 2 Mitigating System Performance Index, Residual Heat Removal System PI had crossed the threshold from Green to White in the 2nd quarter of 2007. As a result of the additional White PI on Unit 2 and the White parallel PI inspection finding, Unit 2 would again be in the Degraded Cornerstone column (two White inputs into the Mitigating System Cornerstone) of the NRC's Action Matrix. However, because the RHR containment sump suction valve failures were the primary cause of the PI crossing the White threshold, we did not consider the White PI as an assessment input to the NRC Action Matrix. Therefore, Unit 2 is in the Degraded Cornerstone column based on the Yellow finding for RHR containment sump suction valve failures.

We will conduct a supplemental inspection (Inspection Procedure 95002) when you have notified us of your readiness for the NRC to review the actions taken to address each of these issues. This inspection procedure is conducted to provide assurance that the root and contributing causes for the individual and collective risk significant performance issues are understood, to independently assess the extent of condition, to provide assurance that the corrective actions are sufficient to prevent recurrence, and to independently determine if safety culture components caused or significantly contributed to these risk significant performance issues.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

Please contact Mr. Scott Shaeffer at 404-562-4521 with any questions you may have regarding this letter.

Sincerely;

/RA/

Charles A. Casto, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos.: 50-348 and 50-364
License Nos.: NPF-2 and NPF-8

cc: (See page 2)

Two additional inputs were also applicable to our review of Unit 2. As previously noted in our mid-cycle assessment letter, the Unit 2 Mitigating System Performance Index, Residual Heat Removal System PI had crossed the threshold from Green to White in the 2nd quarter of 2007. As a result of the additional White PI on Unit 2 and the White parallel PI inspection finding, Unit 2 would again be in the Degraded Cornerstone column (two White inputs into the Mitigating System Cornerstone) of the NRC's Action Matrix. However, because the RHR containment sump suction valve failures were the primary cause of the PI crossing the White threshold, we did not consider the White PI as an assessment input to the NRC Action Matrix. Therefore, Unit 2 is in the Degraded Cornerstone column based on the Yellow finding for RHR containment sump suction valve failures.

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Sincerely;

R/A

Charles A. Casto, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

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License Nos.: NPF-2 and NPF-8

cc: (See page 2)

X PUBLICLY AVAILABLE NON-PUBLICLY AVAILABLE SENSITIVE X NON-SENSITIVE

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DATE	11/09/2007	11/09/2007	11/09/2007				
E-MAIL COPY?	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO	YES NO

SNC

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Letter to J. Randy Johnson from Charles A. Casto dated November 9, 2007

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT FOLLOW-UP LETTER - JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT

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