



Tennessee Valley Authority, Post Office Box 2000, Spring City, Tennessee 37381-2000

John A. Scalice  
Site Vice President, Watts Bar Nuclear Plant

JUL 15 1997

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
ATTN: Document Control Desk  
Washington, D.C. 20555

Gentlemen:

In the Matter of  
Tennessee Valley Authority

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Docket No. 50-390

WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT (WBN) UNIT 1 - LICENSE AMENDMENT TO  
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION (WBN-TS-96-010) - SPENT FUEL POOL STORAGE  
CAPACITY INCREASE (TAC NO. M96930)

The purpose of this letter is to provide confirmation that the spent fuel pool rack gaps would be inspected following an earthquake greater than an Operating Basis Earthquake (OBE) and to provide a status of the spent fuel rack weld examinations that TVA committed to perform during a June 18, 1997 meeting with the NRC.

In a teleconference with the NRC Project Manager on July 2, 1997, NRC indicated that the Structural Branch requested confirmation that the spent fuel pool rack gaps would be inspected following an OBE. In TVA's letter dated February 24, 1997, TVA stated, "The plant would be verified to be adequate for restart or continued operation. This verification would ensure that the plant can be maintained in a safe shutdown condition, the integrity of the reactor coolant system has not been violated, and safety of the spent fuel pool is not compromised. The fuel rack gaps would be one aspect of the spent fuel pool integrity investigation."

By this letter, TVA is providing confirmation that the rack gaps are specifically identified in the abnormal operating instruction as one of the plant features of the inspection following an earthquake.

During the June 18, 1997 meeting, TVA committed to perform weld examinations of the accessible welds which attach the spent fuel

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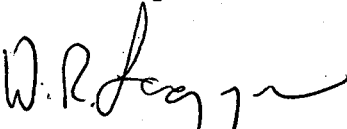


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storage cells to the top and bottom castings of the racks. This commitment was documented under Item 3 of Enclosure 1 to TVA's letter of June 26, 1997. Weld examinations have been performed by personnel from TVA's Weld Engineering section. The examinations received checks by a second party individual and were spot checked and witnessed by TVA's Quality Control section. The examinations covered a total of 11,088 welds. The welds were found to conform to the weld detail shown on the manufacturer's drawing and were described by the examiners to be of good quality. A relatively small number of welds (20 of the 11,088 welds) were found to have some undersize, estimated by the examiners to be 1/32 inch or less. The weld interaction ratio has been calculated to be 0.51 against a maximum allowable of 1.0. Therefore, it has been determined that the small amount of undersize does not significantly affect the structural integrity of the welds. The examinations did not identify any indications which would cause concern about the structural integrity of the welds. Therefore, the commitment made in the June 18, 1997 meeting and documented in the June 26, 1997 letter has been met and the spent fuel storage racks are acceptable for use.

If you should have any questions, please contact P. L. Pace at (423) 365-1824.

Sincerely,



for J. A. Scalice

cc: NRC Resident Inspector  
Watts Bar Nuclear Plant  
1260 Nuclear Plant Road  
Spring City, Tennessee 37381

Mr. Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
One White Flint North  
11555 Rockville Pike  
Rockville, Maryland 20852

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Region II  
Atlanta Federal Center  
61 Forsyth St., SW, Suite 23T85  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303