

## B 2.0 SAFETY LIMITS (SLs)

### B 2.1.1 Reactor Core SLs

#### BASES

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##### Background

GDC 10 (Ref. 1) requires that specified acceptable fuel design limits are not exceeded during steady state operation, normal operational transients, and anticipated operational occurrences (AOOs). This is accomplished by having a departure from nucleate boiling (DNB) design basis, which corresponds to a 95% probability at a 95% confidence level (the 95/95 DNB criterion) that DNB will not occur and by requiring that fuel centerline temperature stays below the melting temperature.

The restrictions of this SL prevent overheating of the fuel and cladding, as well as possible cladding perforation, that would result in the release of fission products to the reactor coolant. Overheating of the fuel is prevented by maintaining the steady state peak linear heat rate (LHR) below the level at which fuel centerline melting occurs. Overheating of the fuel cladding is prevented by restricting fuel operation to within the nucleate boiling regime, where the heat transfer coefficient is large and the cladding surface temperature is slightly above the coolant saturation temperature.

Fuel centerline melting occurs when the local LHR, or power peaking, in a region of the fuel is high enough to cause the fuel centerline temperature to reach the melting point of the fuel. Expansion of the pellet upon centerline melting may cause the pellet to stress the cladding to the point of failure, allowing an uncontrolled release of activity to the reactor coolant.

Operation above the boundary of the nucleate boiling regime could result in excessive cladding temperature because of the onset of DNB and the resultant sharp reduction in heat transfer coefficient. Inside the steam film, high cladding temperatures are reached, and a cladding water (zirconium water) reaction may take place. This chemical reaction results in oxidation of the fuel cladding to a structurally weaker form. This weaker form may lose its integrity, resulting in an uncontrolled release of activity to the reactor coolant.

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BASES

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BACKGROUND  
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DNB is not a directly measurable parameter during operation; therefore, THERMAL POWER, reactor coolant temperature, and pressure are related to DNB through critical heat flux (CHF) correlations. The primary DNB correlations are the WRB-1 correlation (Ref. 7) for VANTAGE 5H and VANTAGE+ fuel and the WRB-2M correlation (Ref. 8) for RFA-2 fuel with IFMs. These DNB correlations take credit for significant improvement in the accuracy of the CHF predictions. The W-3 CHF correlation (Refs. 9 and 10) is used for conditions outside the range of the WRB-1 correlation for VANTAGE 5H and VANTAGE+ fuel or the WRB-2M correlation for RFA-2 fuel with IFMs.

The proper functioning of the Reactor Protection System (RPS) and steam generator safety valves prevents violation of the reactor core SLs.

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APPLICABLE  
SAFETY  
ANALYSES

The fuel cladding must not sustain damage as a result of normal operation and AOOs. The reactor core SLs are established to preclude violation of the following fuel design criteria:

- a. There must be at least 95% probability at a 95% confidence level (the 95/95 DNB criterion) that the hot fuel rod in the core does not experience DNB; and
- b. The hot fuel pellet in the core must not experience centerline fuel melting.

The Reactor Trip System setpoints (Ref. 2), in combination with all the LCOs, are designed to prevent any anticipated combination of transient conditions for Reactor Coolant System (RCS) temperature, pressure, and THERMAL POWER level that would result in a departure from nucleate boiling ratio (DNBR) of less than the DNBR limit and preclude the existence of flow instabilities.

Automatic enforcement of these reactor core SLs is provided by the following functions:

- a. High pressurizer pressure trip;
- b. Low pressurizer pressure trip;
- c. Overtemperature  $\Delta T$  trip;
- d. Overpower  $\Delta T$  trip;

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BASES

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APPLICABLE  
SAFETY  
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- e. Power Range Neutron Flux trip; and
- f. Steam generator safety valves.

The limitation that the average enthalpy in the hot leg be less than or equal to the enthalpy of saturated liquid also ensures that the  $\Delta T$  measured by instrumentation, used in the RPS design as a measure of core power, is proportional to core power.

The SLs represent a design requirement for establishing the RPS trip setpoints identified previously. LCO 3.4.1, "RCS Pressure, Temperature, and Flow Departure from Nucleate Boiling (DNB) Limits," or the assumed initial conditions of the safety analyses (as indicated in the FSAR, Ref. 2) provide more restrictive limits to ensure that the SLs are not exceeded.

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SAFETY LIMITS

The curves provided in Figure B 2.1.1-1 show the loci of points of THERMAL POWER, RCS pressure, and average temperature for which the minimum DNBR is not less than the safety analyses limit, that fuel centerline temperature remains below melting, that the average enthalpy in the hot leg is less than or equal to the enthalpy of saturated liquid, or that the exit quality is within the limits defined by the DNBR correlation.

The curves are based on enthalpy hot channel factor limits provided in the COLR. The dashed line of Figure B 2.1.1-1 shows an example of a limit curve at 2235 psig. In addition, it illustrates the various RPS functions that are designed to prevent the unit from reaching the limit.

The SL is higher than the limit calculated when the AFD is within the limits of the  $F_1(\Delta I)$  function of the overtemperature  $\Delta T$  reactor trip. When the AFD is not within the tolerance, the AFD effect on the overtemperature  $\Delta T$  reactor trips will reduce the setpoints to provide protection consistent with the reactor core SLs (Refs. 3 and 4).

To meet the DNB design criterion, uncertainties in plant operating parameters, nuclear and thermal parameters, fuel fabrication parameters and computer codes must be considered. The effects of these uncertainties have been statistically combined with the correlation uncertainty to determine design limit DNBR values that satisfy the DNB design criterion. SL 2.1.1 reflects the use of the WRB-1 CHF correlation with design limit DNBR values of 1.25/1.24 (typical/thimble) for VANTAGE 5H and VANTAGE+ fuel and the WRB-2M CHF correlation with design limit DNBR values of 1.23/1.23 (typical/thimble) for RFA-2 fuel with IFMs.

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SAFETY LIMITS  
(continued) Additional DNBR margin is maintained by performing the safety analyses to higher DNBR limits. This margin between the design and safety analysis limit is more than sufficient to offset known DNBR penalties (e.g., rod bow and transition core) and to provide the DNBR margin for operating and design flexibility.

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APPLICABILITY SL 2.1.1 only applies in MODES 1 and 2 because these are the only MODES in which the reactor is critical. Automatic protection functions are required to be OPERABLE during MODES 1 and 2 to ensure operation within the reactor core SLs. The steam generator safety valves or automatic protection actions serve to prevent RCS heatup to the reactor core SL conditions or to initiate a reactor trip function, which forces the unit into MODE 3. Setpoints for the reactor trip functions are specified in LCO 3.3.1, "Reactor Trip System (RTS) Instrumentation." In MODES 3, 4, 5, and 6, Applicability is not required since the reactor is not generating significant THERMAL POWER.

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SAFETY LIMIT VIOLATIONS The following SL violation responses are applicable to the reactor core SLs.

2.2.1

If SL 2.1.1 is violated, the requirement to go to MODE 3 places the unit in a MODE in which this SL is not applicable.

The allowed Completion Time of 1 hour recognizes the importance of bringing the unit to a MODE of operation where this SL is not applicable, and reduces the probability of fuel damage.

2.2.3

If SL 2.1.1 is violated, the NRC Operations Center must be notified within 1 hour, in accordance with 10 CFR 50.72 (Ref. 5).

2.2.4

If SL 2.1.1 is violated, the Plant Manager, Site Vice President, and Nuclear Safety Review Board (NSRB) shall be notified within 24 hours. This 24-hour period provides time for the plant operators and staff to take the appropriate immediate action and assess the condition of the unit before reporting to the senior management.

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SAFETY LIMIT  
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2.2.5

If SL 2.1.1 is violated, a Licensee Event Report shall be prepared and submitted within 30 days to the NRC in accordance with 10 CFR 50.73 (Ref. 6). A copy of the report shall also be provided to the Plant Manager, Site Vice President, and NSRB.

2.2.6

If SL 2.1.1 is violated, restart of the unit shall not commence until authorized by the NRC. This requirement ensures the NRC that all necessary reviews, analyses, and actions are completed before the unit begins its restart to normal operation.

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REFERENCES

1. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 50, Appendix A, General Design Criterion 10, "Reactor Design."
2. Watts Bar FSAR, Section 7.2, "Reactor Trip System."
3. WCAP-8746-A, "Design Bases for the Overtemperature  $\Delta T$  and the Overpower  $\Delta T$  Trips," March 1977.
4. WCAP-9272-P-A, "Westinghouse Reload Safety Evaluation Methodology," July 1985.
5. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 50.72, "Immediate Notification Requirements for Operating Nuclear Power Reactors."
6. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 50.73, "Licensee Event Report System."
7. WCAP-8762-P-A, "New Westinghouse Correlation WRB-1 for Predicting Critical Heat Flux in Rod Bundles with Mixing Vane Grids," July 1984.
8. WCAP-15025-P-A, "Modified WRB-2 Correlation, WRB-2M, for Predicting Critical Heat Flux in 17 x 17 Rod Bundles with Modified LPD Mixing Vane Grids," April 1999.
9. Tong, L. S., "Boiling Crisis and Critical Heat Flux," AEC Critical Review Series, TID-25887, 1972.

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REFERENCES  
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10. Tong, L. S., "Critical Heat Fluxes on Rod Bundles," in "Two-Phase Flow and Heat Transfer in Rod Bundles," pages 31 through 41, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, New York, 1969
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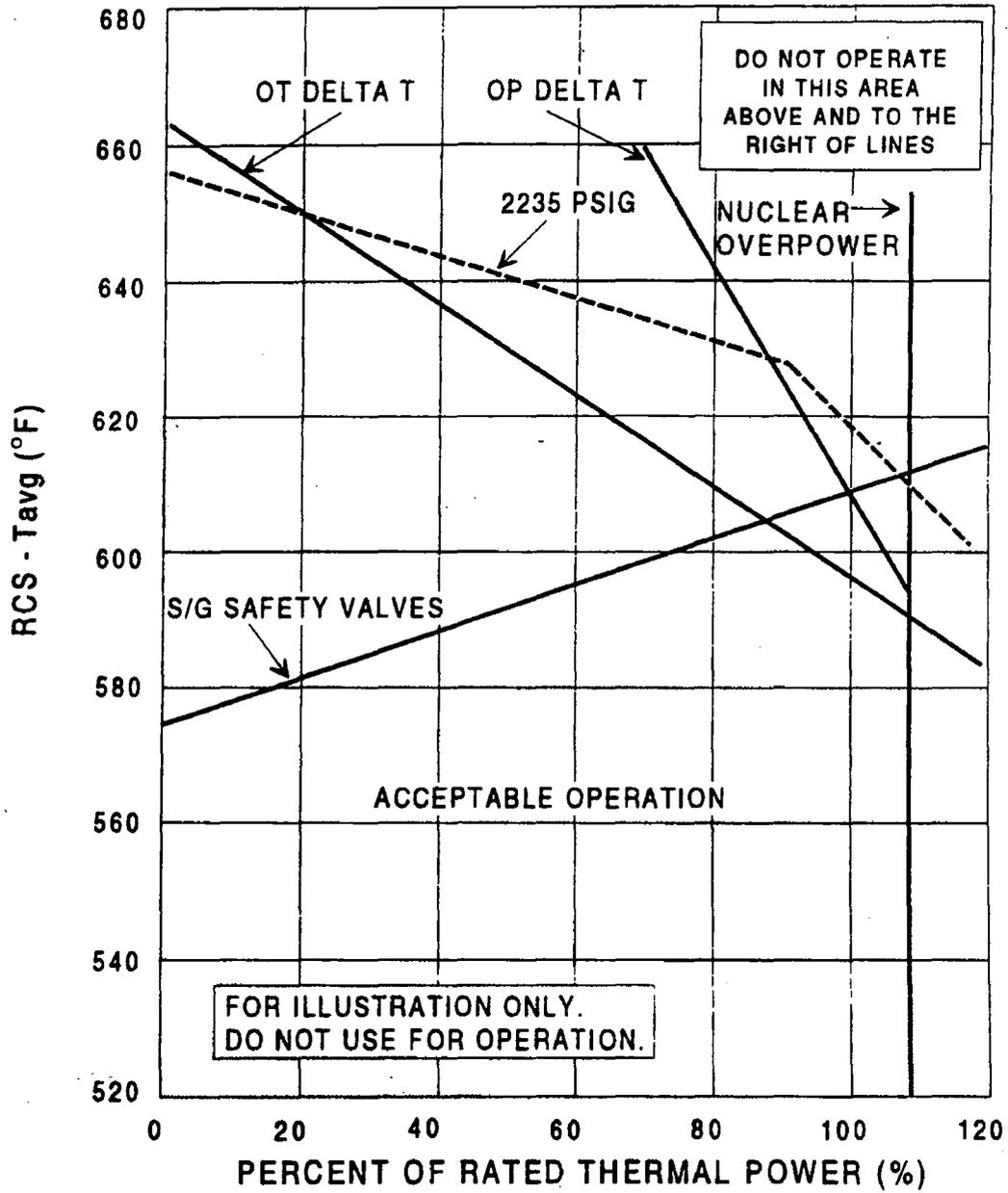


Figure B 2.1.1-1 (page 1 of 1)  
Reactor Core Safety Limits vs. Boundary of Protection

## B 2.0 SAFETY LIMITS (SLs)

### B 2.1.2 Reactor Coolant System (RCS) Pressure SL

#### BASES

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##### Background

The SL on RCS pressure protects the integrity of the RCS against overpressurization. In the event of fuel cladding failure, fission products are released into the reactor coolant. The RCS then serves as the primary barrier in preventing the release of fission products into the atmosphere. By establishing an upper limit on RCS pressure, the continued integrity of the RCS is ensured. According to 10 CFR 50, Appendix A, GDC 14, "Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary," and GDC 15, "Reactor Coolant System Design," (Ref. 1), the reactor coolant pressure boundary (RCPB) design conditions are not to be exceeded during normal operation and anticipated operational occurrences (AOOs). Also, in accordance with GDC 28, "Reactivity Limits," (Ref. 1), reactivity accidents, including rod ejection, do not result in damage to the RCPB greater than limited local yielding.

The design pressure of the RCS is 2500 psia. During normal operation and AOOs, RCS pressure is limited from exceeding the design pressure by more than 10%, in accordance with Section III of the ASME Code (Ref. 2). To ensure system integrity, all RCS components are hydrostatically tested at 125% of design pressure, according to the ASME Code requirements prior to initial operation when there is no fuel in the core. Following inception of unit operation, RCS components shall be pressure tested, in accordance with the requirements of ASME Code, Section XI (Ref. 3).

Overpressurization of the RCS could result in a breach of the RCPB. If such a breach occurs in conjunction with a fuel cladding failure, fission products could enter the containment atmosphere, raising concerns relative to limits on radioactive releases specified in 10 CFR 100, "Reactor Site Criteria," (Ref. 4).

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The RCS pressurizer safety valves, the main steam safety valves (MSSVs), and the reactor high pressure trip have settings established to ensure that the RCS pressure SL will not be exceeded.

The RCS pressurizer safety valves are sized to prevent system pressure from exceeding the design pressure by more than 10%, as specified in Section III of the ASME Code for Nuclear Power Plant Components (Ref. 2). The transient that establishes the required relief capacity, and hence valve size requirements and lift settings, is a complete loss of external load without a direct reactor trip. During the transient, no control actions are assumed, except that the safety valves on the secondary plant are assumed to open when the steam pressure reaches the secondary plant safety valve settings.

The Reactor Trip System setpoints (Ref. 5), together with the settings of the MSSVs (Ref. 8), provide pressure protection for normal operation and AOOs. The reactor high pressure trip setpoint is specifically set to provide protection against overpressurization (Ref. 5). The safety analyses for both the high pressure trip and the RCS pressurizer safety valves are performed using conservative assumptions relative to pressure control devices.

More specifically, no credit is taken for operation of the following:

- a. Pressurizer power operated relief valves (PORVs);
- b. Steam line power operated relief valve (PORV);
- c. Steam Dump System;
- d. Reactor Control System;
- e. Pressurizer Level Control System; or
- f. Pressurizer spray valve.

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SAFETY LIMITS

The maximum transient pressure allowed in the RCS pressure vessel, piping, valves, and fittings under the ASME Code, Section III, is 110% of design pressure. Therefore, the SL on maximum allowable RCS pressure is 2735 psig.

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APPLICABILITY SL 2.1.2 applies in MODES 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 because this SL could be approached or exceeded in these MODES due to overpressurization events. The SL is not applicable in MODE 6 because the reactor vessel head closure bolts are not fully tightened, making it unlikely that the RCS can be pressurized.

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SAFETY LIMIT VIOLATIONS The following SL violations are applicable to the RCS pressure SL.

2.2.2.1

If the RCS pressure SL is violated when the reactor is in MODE 1 or 2, the requirement is to restore compliance and be in MODE 3 within 1 hour.

Exceeding the RCS pressure SL may cause immediate RCS failure and create a potential for radioactive releases in excess of 10 CFR 100, "Reactor Site Criteria," limits (Ref. 4).

The allowable Completion Time of 1 hour recognizes the importance of reducing power level to a MODE of operation where the potential for challenges to safety systems is minimized.

2.2.2.2

If the RCS pressure SL is exceeded in MODE 3, 4, or 5, RCS pressure must be restored to within the SL value within 5 minutes. Exceeding the RCS pressure SL in MODE 3, 4, or 5 is more severe than exceeding this SL in MODE 1 or 2, since the reactor vessel temperature may be lower and the vessel material, consequently, less ductile. As such, pressure must be reduced to less than the SL within 5 minutes. The action does not require reducing MODES, since this would require reducing temperature, which would compound the problem by adding thermal gradient stresses to the existing pressure stress.

2.2.3

If the RCS pressure SL is violated, the NRC Operations Center must be notified within 1 hour, in accordance with 10 CFR 50.72 (Ref. 6).

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SAFETY LIMIT  
VIOLATIONS  
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2.2.4

If the RCS pressure SL is violated, the Plant Manager, Site Vice President, and Nuclear Safety Review Board (NSRB) shall be notified within 24 hours. The 24 hour period provides time for the plant operators and staff to take the appropriate immediate action and assess the condition of the unit before reporting to senior management.

2.2.5

If the RCS pressure SL is violated, a Licensee Event Report shall be prepared and submitted within 30 days to the NRC in accordance with 10 CFR 50.73 (Ref. 7). A copy of the report shall also be provided to the Plant Manager, Site Vice President, and NSRB.

2.2.6

If the RCS pressure SL is violated, restart of the unit shall not commence until authorized by the NRC. This requirement ensures the NRC that all necessary reviews, analyses, and actions are completed before the unit begins its restart to normal operation

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REFERENCES

1. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 50, Appendix A, General Design Criterion 14, "Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary"; General Design Criterion 15, "Reactor Coolant System Design"; and General Design Criterion 28, "Reactivity Limits."
2. American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, Section III, "Nuclear Power Plant Components," Article NB-7000, "Protection Against Overpressure."
3. American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, Section XI, IWX-5000, "System Pressure Tests."
4. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 100, "Reactor Site Criteria."
5. Watts Bar FSAR, Section 7.2, "Reactor Trip System."
6. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 50.72, "Immediate Notification Requirements for Operating Nuclear Power Reactors."

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BASES

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REFERENCES  
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7. Title 10, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 50.73, "Licensee Event Report System."
  8. Watts Bar FSAR, Section 10.3, "Main Steam Supply System."
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