



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 23, 2010

Mr. Mark J. Ajluni
Manager, Nuclear Licensing
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc
40 Inverness Center Parkway
Post Office Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201

SUBJECT: EDWIN I. HATCH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT NOS. 1 AND 2, RESULTS OF
ACCEPTANCE REVIEW REGARDING REQUESTS FOR RELIEF (TAC NOS.
ME3327 AND ME3328)

Dear Mr. Ajluni:

By letter dated February 16, 2010, Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (SNC) submitted a request for relief, ISI-ALT-09, Version 1, from certain requirements of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code (ASME Code), Section XI, at the Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2. Specifically, SNC proposes to perform the VT-2 visual examinations during the system leakage test at a pressure lower than the ASME Code required pressure following repair and replacement activities that were performed subsequent to the leakage test that is required by ASME Code, Section XI, Table IWB-2500-1, Item B15.10. The purpose of this letter is to provide the results of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff's acceptance review of this relief request (RR). The acceptance review was performed to determine if there is sufficient technical information in scope and depth to allow the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical review. The acceptance review is also intended to identify whether the RR has any readily apparent information insufficiencies in its characterization of the regulatory requirements or the licensing basis of the plant.

Pursuant to Sections 50.55a(a)(3)(i) and 50.55a(a)(3)(ii) of Title 10 of the Code of *Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), the applicant shall demonstrate that the proposed alternative would provide an acceptable level of quality and safety, or that compliance with the specified requirements of Section 50.55a would result in hardship or unusual difficulty without a compensating increase in the level of quality or safety.

The NRC staff has reviewed your RR and concludes that additional information is necessary to enable the NRC staff to make an independent assessment regarding the acceptability of the proposed RR in terms of regulatory requirements and the protection of public health and safety and the environment.

In order to make your RR complete, the NRC staff requests that SNC supplement it to address the information identified below no later than April 2, 2010.

1. Provide clarification of the intent of your application with respect to whether an alternative is being proposed to the requirements of 10 CFR 50.55a(g) as it relates to the applicable Edition of the ASME Code for HNP and the requirement stated in 10 CFR 50.55a(b)(2)(xxvi) for the pressure testing of mechanical joints. For example, the discussion in your application suggests that your application is applicable to mechanical

joints, whereas many of the sections of the Code cited in your application appear applicable to the requirements for inspection of welded or brazed joints.

2. Provide clarification of those components the RR applies to. Currently, in one location, the RR refers to all Class 1 items and in another location it refers to those components that are less than one inch in size and to mechanical connections.
3. Provide details of the hardship involved with performing the test at a pressure of 1045 pounds per square inch gauge (psig), versus 920 psig. Specifically, provide details regarding whether the hardship is due to occupational radiation exposure at 100 percent versus 5 percent power, personnel safety issues involved with the additional heatup time required to perform the test at 1045 psig, unusual alignments of valves, or other considerations.

Provision of the above information is required to enable the NRC staff to complete its technical review. If the information response to this request is not received by the above date, the application will not be accepted for review pursuant to 10CFR2.101, and the NRC staff will cease its review activities.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch II-1
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-321, 50-366

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M. Ajluni

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/RA/

Robert E. Martin, Senior Project Manager
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*Via memo dated

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