



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

July 15, 2010

Mr. R. M. Krich
Vice President, Nuclear Licensing
Tennessee Valley Authority
3R Lookout Place
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402-2801

SUBJECT: WATTS BAR NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT 1 – ACCEPTANCE REVIEW
REGARDING THE PROPOSED RELIEF REQUEST PV-02, REVISION 1
(TAC NO. ME4204)

Dear Mr. Krich:

By letter dated July 1, 2010 (Agencywide Document and Access Management System Accession No. ML101870600), Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) submitted Relief Request PV-02, Revision 1 for Watts Bar Nuclear Plant (WBN), Unit 1. Relief Request PV-02, Revision 1 proposes an alternative to certain inservice testing (IST) requirements of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers *Code for Operation and Maintenance of Nuclear Power Plants* for WBN Unit 1. The relief request applies to the second 10-year IST interval that began on May 27, 2007, and will end on May 26, 2016. The subject relief request involves an inclusion of preservice testing requirements of ISTB-5210(a) in addition to the original Relief Request PV-02 authorized by letter dated March 9, 2007.

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. 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 application 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*, the applicant shall demonstrate that the proposed alternatives 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 application and concluded that it does provide technical information in sufficient detail to enable the staff to proceed with its detailed technical review and make an independent assessment regarding the acceptability of the proposed relief request in terms of regulatory requirements and the protection of public health and safety and the environment. If additional information is needed for the NRC staff to complete its technical review, you will be advised by separate correspondence that will require an expedited response from TVA.

R. M. Krich

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In TVA Relief Request PV-02, Revision 1, dated July 1, 2010, you are requesting NRC to complete its review by September 1, 2010. The NRC performance goals for licensing actions is to complete 90-percent in less than 1 year and 100-percent in less than 2 years. This is the fourth time in the last few months that TVA has requested NRC complete its review in less than 1 year. In TVA amendment request dated February 24, 2010, regarding the one-time chiller upgrade project, you are requesting NRC to complete its review by December 1, 2010. In TVA amendment request dated May 28, 2010, regarding the change in the control rod material, you are requesting NRC to complete its review of the change by March 1, 2011. In TVA Relief Request PV-05 dated July 1, 2010, you are requesting NRC to complete its review by September 1, 2010. I am gravely concerned that this is becoming pattern. I strongly recommend that TVA plans its licensing actions consistent with the NRC performance goals.

For a variety of reasons, it is very unlikely that NRC will see significant budget growth during fiscal year 2011. This reality will require the NRC staff to exercise greater self-discipline in the way the NRC manages its licensing resources to achieve its performance goals. Operating within a more constrained budget is likely to be difficult and stressful for the NRC staff. Nonetheless, the NRC staff will endeavor to complete its review consistent with the proposed TVA schedule.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-3100.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John G. Lamb". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being the most prominent.

John G. Lamb, Senior Project Manager
Watts Bar Special Projects Branch
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No.: 50-390

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R. M. Krich

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Sincerely,
/RA/

John G. Lamb, Senior Project Manager
Watts Bar Special Projects Branch
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
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