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MAY 09 2012

Docket Nos.: 52-025
52-026

ND-12-0987

U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D. C. 20555-0001

Vogtle Electric Generating Plant – Units 3 and 4
60-Day Response to NRC Letter, Request for Information Pursuant to Title 10 of
the Code of Federal Regulations 50.54(f) Regarding Recommendations 2.1, 2.3,
and 9.3, of the Near-Term Task Force Review of Insights from the
Fukushima Daiichi Accident, dated March 12, 2012

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On March 12, 2012, the NRC staff issued a letter entitled, *Request for Information Pursuant to Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations 50.54(f) Regarding Recommendations 2.1, 2.3, and 9.3, of the Near-Term Task Force Review of Insights from the Fukushima Dai-Ichi Accident*. Enclosure 5 of the letter contains specific Requested Actions and Requested Information associated with Recommendation 9.3 for Emergency Preparedness (EP) programs. In accordance with 10 CFR 50.54, "Conditions of licenses," paragraph (f), addressees were requested to submit a written response to the information requests within 90 days.

The letter states that if an addressee cannot meet the requested response date, then the addressee must provide a response within 60 days of the date of the letter and describe the alternative course of action that it proposes to take, including the basis of the acceptability of the proposed alternative course of action and estimated completion date. After a careful review of the requested actions and information, we propose to take the alternative course of action described in Enclosure 1 of this letter. The basis for our proposal is explained in Enclosure 2.

This letter contains no NRC commitments. If you have any questions, please contact John Giddens at (205) 992-7924.

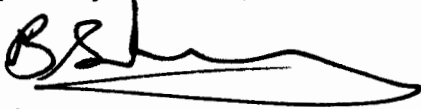
Mr. B. L. Ivey states he is a Vice President of Southern Nuclear Operating Company, is authorized to execute this oath on behalf of Southern Nuclear Operating Company and, to the best of his knowledge and belief, the facts set forth in this letter are true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 9th day of May, 2012.

Nancy Louise Henderson
Notary Public

My commission expires: March 23, 2014

Respectfully submitted,



B. L. Ivey
Regulatory Affairs Vice President

BLI/JMG

- Enclosures: 1. Proposed Alternative Course of Action for Responding to Recommendation 9.3 Information Request
2. Basis for Proposed Alternative Course of Action for Responding to EP Requested Information

cc: Southern Nuclear Operating Company

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Mr. J. A. Miller, Executive VP, Nuclear Development
Mr. D. A. Bost, Chief Nuclear Officer
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Mr. J. R. Johnson, VP, Operational Readiness, Vogtle 3 & 4
Mr. T. E. Tynan, Site VP, Vogtle 1 & 2
Mr. D. M. Lloyd, Project Support Director, Vogtle 3 & 4
Mr. C. R. Pierce, Regulatory Affairs Director
Mr. M. J. Ajluni, Nuclear Licensing Director
Mr. D. L. Fulton, Environmental Manager
Mr. J. D. Williams, Site Support Manager, Vogtle 3 & 4
Mr. C. H. Mahan, Site Licensing Manager, Vogtle 3 & 4
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Document Services RTYPE: GOV0208
File AR.01.02.06

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Mr. B. M. Baval, Project Manager of New Reactors
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Enclosure 1

**Proposed Alternative Course of Action for Responding to Recommendation
9.3 Information Request**

Enclosure 1
Proposed Alternative Course of Action
for Responding to Recommendation 9.3 Information Request

Communications

Request #	Estimated Completion Date	Requested Information
1	05/20/2015	<p>Provide an assessment of the current communications systems and equipment used during an emergency event to identify any enhancements that may be needed to ensure communications are maintained during a large scale natural event meeting the conditions described [<i>in the Discussion section</i>]. The assessment should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify any planned or potential improvements to existing onsite communications systems and their required normal and/or backup power supplies, • Identify any planned or potential improvements to existing offsite communications systems and their required normal and/or backup power supplies, • Provide a description of any new communications system(s) or technologies that will be deployed based upon the assumed conditions described above, and • Provide a description of how the new and/or improved systems and power supplies will be able to provide for communications during a loss of all AC power
2	05/20/2015	Describe any interim actions that have been taken or are planned to be taken to enhance existing communications systems power supplies until the communications assessment and the resulting actions are complete.
3	Two dates	Provide an implementation schedule of the time needed to conduct and implement the results of the communications assessment.
	04/20/2015	Conduct the communications assessment.
	05/20/2015	Provide an implementation schedule of the time needed to implement the results of the communications assessment.

Enclosure 1
Proposed Alternative Course of Action
for Responding to Recommendation 9.3 Information Request

Staffing

Request #	Estimated Completion Date	Requested Information
1	Two dates	<p>Provide an assessment of the onsite and augmented staff needed to respond to a large scale natural event meeting the conditions described [in the Discussion section]. This assessment should include a discussion of the onsite and augmented staff available to implement the strategies as discussed in the emergency plan and/or described in plant operating procedures. The following functions are requested to be assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How onsite staff will move back-up equipment (e.g., pumps, generators) from alternate onsite storage facilities to repair locations at each reactor as described in the order regarding the NTTF Recommendation 4.2. It is requested that consideration be given to the major functional areas of NUREG-0654, Table B-1 such as plant operations and assessment of operational aspects, emergency direction and control, notification/communication, radiological accident assessment, and support of operational accident assessment, as appropriate. • New staff or functions identified as a result of the assessment. • Collateral duties (personnel not being prevented from timely performance of their assigned functions).
	05/20/2015	Provide onsite and augmented staffing assessment considering all requested functions except those related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2. [Phase 1 staffing assessment]
	05/20/2015	Provide onsite and augmented staffing assessment considering functions related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2. [Phase 2 staffing assessment]
2	Four dates	Provide an implementation schedule of the time needed to conduct the onsite and augmented staffing assessment. If any modifications are determined to be appropriate, please include in the schedule the time to implement the changes.
	1. Conduct the onsite and augmented staffing assessment:	
	04/20/2015	The onsite and augmented staffing assessment considering all requested functions except those related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2. [Phase 1 staffing assessment]
	04/20/2015	The onsite and augmented staffing assessment considering functions related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2. [Phase 2 staffing assessment]

Enclosure 1
Proposed Alternative Course of Action
for Responding to Recommendation 9.3 Information Request

Request #	Estimated Completion Date	Requested Information
		2. A schedule of the time to needed to implement changes will be provided as follows:
	05/20/2015	Those associated with the Phase 1 staffing assessment.
	05/20/2015	Those associated with the Phase 2 staffing assessment.
3	05/20/2015	Identify how the augmented staff would be notified given degraded communications capabilities.
4	05/20/2015	Identify the methods of access (e.g., roadways, navigable bodies of water and dockage, airlift, etc.) to the site that are expected to be available after a widespread large scale natural event.
5	05/20/2015	Identify any interim actions that have been taken or are planned prior to the completion of the staffing assessment.
6	Two dates	Identify changes that have been made or will be made to your emergency plan regarding the on-shift or augmented staffing changes necessary to respond to a loss of all AC power, multi-unit event, including any new or revised agreements with offsite resource providers (e.g., staffing, equipment, transportation, etc.). Changes will be identified as follows:
	05/20/2015	Those associated with the Phase 1 staffing assessment.
	05/20/2015	Those associated with the Phase 2 staffing assessment.

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Enclosure 2

**Basis for Proposed Alternative Course of Action for Responding to EP
Requested Information**

Enclosure 2
Basis for Proposed Alternative Course of Action
for Responding to EP Requested Information

Background

In February 2012, Southern Nuclear was issued a Construction and Operating License (COL) for Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 3 and 4. These units are currently under construction. Fuel load is scheduled for 2016. Prior to fuel load, an emergency preparedness exercise will be conducted and evaluated by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Requested information related to communications and staffing will be provided prior to conducting this exercise.

The initial full-participation exercise required by Section IV.F.2.a(2) of Appendix E to 10 CFR Part 50 will be conducted as part of the combined license Inspection, Testing, Analysis, Acceptance criteria (ITAAC). The exercise will be conducted along with other inspections, tests, and analyses, and must meet the acceptance criteria before fuel is loaded. The ITAAC for the exercise will necessarily be the last emergency preparedness ITAAC completed. In that all other ITAAC related to both onsite and offsite emergency preparedness would have been met prior to the conduct of the exercise, all the necessary onsite and offsite plans, procedures, personnel, equipment, etc. would be in place to allow for the testing of both the licensee's and State and local emergency response plans as required by Appendix E. Utilization of this milestone for the development of schedules to support the information request forms the basis for the proposed alternative course of action.

Note: The tables in Enclosure 1 have specified actions. In the left column, there are references to "2 dates" or "4 dates." In this response, some of those actions will have the same date but the format is being kept consistent for ease of comparison.

Communications

The proposed timing is warranted given the current status of VEGP 3&4, which is currently being constructed.

Enclosure 2
 Basis for Proposed Alternative Course of Action
 for Responding to EP Requested Information

Staffing

As presented in Enclosure 1 of this letter, a 2-phase approach will be used to respond to the information requests associated with Staffing. The table below summarizes this approach.

Plant Type	Phase 1 Staffing Assessment (for functions except those related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2)	Phase 2 Staffing Assessment (for functions related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2)
Multi-unit plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform staffing assessment and implement actions as required by recent EP Rule using ISG and NEI 10-05 • Perform staffing assessment as requested by 50.54(f) letter using NEI 12-01 and material from NEI 10-05; provide results per Enclosure 1 of this letter 	Perform staffing assessment as requested by 50.54(f) letter using NEI 12-01; provide results per Enclosure 1 of this letter

The basis for this approach is discussed below.

The Phase 1 staffing assessment will be performed by 04/20/2015. This assessment will consider all requested functions except those related to Fukushima Near-Term Task Force (NTTF) Recommendation 4.2. An assessment considering these functions will be performed in Phase 2.

Section IV.A.9 of 10 CFR 50, Appendix E, requires that licensees complete a detailed analysis demonstrating that on-shift personnel assigned emergency plan implementation functions are not assigned responsibilities that would prevent the timely performance of their assigned functions as specified in the emergency plan. As stated in the EP Rule Final EP Rule issued on November 23, 2011 (76 Fed. Reg. 72,560), this analysis must be completed by December 24, 2012 for operating units. VEGP 3&4 has elected to defer implementation to December 31, 2013 in accordance with the rule.

Following completion of EP Rule staffing analysis, the staffing assessment associated with the NRC Letter will be performed. The staffing assessment for Phase I will be performed in accordance with the Table provided in this letter.

As requested, an implementation schedule for any modifications that are determined to be appropriate will be included with the Phase 1 staffing assessment.

Enclosure 2
Basis for Proposed Alternative Course of Action
for Responding to EP Requested Information

The Phase 2 staffing assessment will also be performed by 04/20/2015 and provided by 05/20/2015. These assessments are separate activities but will both be completed prior to the full scale EP exercise which will be conducted prior to fuel load of Vogtle 3.

The industry will be responding to multiple regulatory actions resulting from the recommendations contained in the Fukushima NTTF Report, as modified in related Commission Papers (SECY's) and Staff Requirements Memoranda (SRM). One of these actions, in particular, has the potential to impact emergency response staffing levels. This action is associated with Fukushima NTTF Recommendation 4.2 and subsequently issued as NRC Order to Modifying Licenses with Regard to Requirements for Mitigation Strategies for Beyond-Design-Basis External Events EA-12-049 [the Order]. A summary of the Order is provided below.

This Order requires a three-phase approach for mitigating beyond-design-basis external events. The initial phase requires the use of installed equipment and resources to maintain or restore core cooling, containment and spent fuel pool (SFP) cooling. The transition phase requires providing sufficient, portable, onsite equipment and consumables to maintain or restore these functions until they can be accomplished with resources brought from off site. The final phase requires obtaining sufficient offsite resources to sustain those functions indefinitely.

Additional details on an acceptable approach for complying with this Order will be contained in final Interim Staff Guidance (ISG) scheduled to be issued by the NRC in August 2012.

In response to the Order, each licensee must develop new strategies for mitigating beyond-design-basis external events. To ensure accurate results, the staffing assessment for response functions related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2 must be based on the actions delineated in procedures and guidelines developed in response to the Order. Once the site-specific actions associated with the new response strategies are defined (e.g., down to the procedure or guideline step level), the staffing needed to perform these actions can be assessed with the necessary level of accuracy.

Based on a review of the planned actions necessary to comply with the Order, an assessment of the staffing for functions related to NTTF Recommendation 4.2 can be provided by 05/20/2015.

As requested, an implementation schedule for any modifications that are determined to be appropriate will be included with the Phase 2 staffing assessment.