May 23, 2012

MEMORANDUM TO: Biweekly Notice Coordinator

FROM: Ravindra Joshi, Project Manager ***/RA/***
Licensing Branch 4 (LB4)
Division of New Reactor Licensing
Office of New Reactors

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PUBLICATION IN BIWEEKLY FR NOTICE - NOTICE OF CONSIDERATION OF ISSUANCE OF AMENDMENTS TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSES AND COMBINED LICENSES, PROPOSED NO SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS CONSIDERATION DETERMINATION, AND OPPORTUNITY FOR A HEARING (TAC NO. RP9403)

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. Docket Nos. 52-025 and 52-026, Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4, Burke County, Georgia

Date of amendment request: April 6, 2012, and revised on April 12 and May 7, 2012

Description of amendment request: The proposed changes would amend Combined License Nos. NPF-91 and NPF-92 for Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4, respectively, in regard to the upper tolerance on the Nuclear Island (NI) critical sections basemat thickness as identified in the plant-specific Design Control Document (DCD).

Basis for proposed no significant hazards consideration determination: As required by 10 CFR 50.91(a), the licensee has provided its analysis of the issue of no significant hazards consideration, which is presented below:

1. Does the proposed amendment involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated?

   Response: No

   As indicated in FSAR (plant-specific DCD) Subsection 3.8.5.5, the design function of the basemat is to provide the interface between the nuclear island structures and the supporting soil or rock. The basemat transfers the load of nuclear island structures to the supporting soil or rock. The basemat transmits seismic motions from the supporting soil or rock to the nuclear island. The revision of the basemat construction tolerance does not have an adverse impact on the response of the basemat and nuclear island structures to safe shutdown earthquake ground motions or loads due to anticipated transients or postulated accident conditions. The revision of the basemat construction tolerance does not impact the support, design, or operation of mechanical and fluid systems. There is no change to plant systems or the response of systems to postulated accident conditions. There is no change to the predicted radioactive releases due to normal operation or postulated accident conditions. The plant response to previously evaluated accidents or external events is not adversely affected, nor does the change described create any new accident precursors. Therefore, there is no significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated.

2. Does the proposed amendment create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated?

   Response: No

   The proposed change is to increase the construction tolerance for the basemat thickness. The revision of the basemat construction tolerance does not change the design of the basemat or nuclear island structures. The revision of the basemat construction tolerance does not change the design function, support, design, or operation of mechanical and fluid systems. The revision of the basemat construction tolerance does not result in a new failure mechanism for the basemat or new accident precursors. As a result, the design function of the basemat is not adversely affected by the proposed change. Therefore, the proposed change will not create the possibility of a new or different kind of accident from any accident previously evaluated.

3. Does the proposed amendment involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety?

   Response: No

   The revision in the basemat thickness construction tolerance does not have an adverse impact on the strength of the basemat. The increase in the basemat thickness construction tolerance does not have an adverse impact on the seismic design spectra or the structural analysis of the basemat or other nuclear island

structures. The revision in the basemat thickness construction tolerance has no impact of the analysis of the nuclear island for sliding or overturning. As a result, the design function of the basemat is not adversely affected by the proposed change. Therefore, the proposed change does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's analysis and, based on this review, it appears that the three standards of 10 CFR 50.92(c) are satisfied. Therefore, the NRC staff proposes to determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

Attorney for licensee: Mr. M. Stanford Blanton, Balch & Bingham LLP, 1710 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203-2015.

NRC Branch Chief: Mark E. Tonacci

structures. The revision in the basemat thickness construction tolerance has no impact of the analysis of the nuclear island for sliding or overturning. As a result, the design function of the basemat is not adversely affected by the proposed change. Therefore, the proposed change does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety.

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's analysis and, based on this review, it appears that the three standards of 10 CFR 50.92(c) are satisfied. Therefore, the NRC staff proposes to determine that the amendment request involves no significant hazards consideration.

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