



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

January 24, 2013

Mr. M. J. Ajluni
Nuclear Licensing Director
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
P. O. Box 1295
Bin - 038
Birmingham, AL 35201-1295

SUBJECT: JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 – ACCEPTANCE
REVIEW CONCERNING VOLUNTARY FIRE PROTECTION RISK INITIATIVE
REQUEST (TAC NOS. ME9741 AND ME9742) (NL-1 2-1893)

Dear Mr. Ajluni:

By letter dated September 25, 2012, the Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (SNC, the licensee) submitted a license amendment request for Joseph M. Farley, Units 1 and 2. The proposed amendment requests the review and approval for adoption of a new fire protection licensing basis which complies with the requirements in Sections 50.48(a) and 50.48(c) to Title 10 to the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), and the guidance in Regulatory Guide (RG) 1.205, Revision 1, *Risk-Informed, Performance-Based Fire Protection for Existing Light-Water Nuclear Power Plants*. The purpose of this letter is to provide the results of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff's acceptance review of this amendment 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.

Consistent with Section 50.90 of 10 CFR, an amendment to the license (including the technical specifications) must fully describe the changes requested, and following as far as applicable, the form prescribed for original applications. Section 50.34 of 10 CFR addresses the content of technical information required. This section stipulates that the submittal address the design and operating characteristics, unusual or novel design features, and principal safety considerations.

The NRC staff has reviewed your application and concluded that it does provide technical information in sufficient detail to enable the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical review and make an independent assessment regarding the acceptability of the proposed amendment in terms of regulatory requirements and the protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Given the lesser scope and depth of the acceptance review as compared to the detailed technical review, there are instances in which issues that impact the NRC staff's ability to complete the detailed technical review are identified despite completion of an adequate acceptance review. You will be advised of any further information needed to support the NRC staff's detailed technical review by separate correspondence. However, the NRC staff notes that SNC has used methods that have not been previously accepted by the staff. This situation can create uncertainty in the application review, since the new method may ultimately be determined to be unacceptable and potentially can result in significant revision to the application for the National Fire Protection Association [NFPA]-805 LAR, to ensure that the NRC staff can perform a thorough review with confidence in the methods being used, the NRC staff is requesting that sensitivity studies be performed that rely on accepted methods, while the new methods are evaluated separately from the application review.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-2315 or via email at Eva.Brown@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Eva A. Brown, Senior Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch II-2
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-348 and 50-364

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M. Ajluni

- 2 -

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