

B 3.4 REACTOR COOLANT SYSTEM (RCS)

B 3.4.6 RCS Loops—MODE 4

BASES

BACKGROUND In MODE 4, the primary function of the reactor coolant is the removal of decay heat and the transfer of this heat to either the steam generator (SG) secondary side coolant or the component cooling water via the residual heat removal (RHR) heat exchangers. The secondary function of the reactor coolant is to act as a carrier for soluble neutron poison, boric acid.

The reactor coolant is circulated through four RCS loops connected in parallel to the reactor vessel, each loop containing an SG, a reactor coolant pump (RCP), and appropriate flow, pressure, level, and temperature instrumentation for control, protection, and indication. The RCPs circulate the coolant through the reactor vessel and SGs at a sufficient rate to ensure proper heat transfer and to prevent boric acid stratification.

In MODE 4, either RCPs or RHR loops can be used to provide forced circulation. The intent of this LCO is to provide forced flow from at least one RCP or one RHR loop for decay heat removal and transport. The flow provided by one RCP loop or RHR loop is adequate for decay heat removal. The other intent of this LCO is to require that two paths be available to provide redundancy for decay heat removal.

APPLICABLE SAFETY ANALYSES In MODE 4, RCS circulation is considered in the determination of the time available for mitigation of the accidental boron dilution event. The RCS and RHR loops provide this circulation.

RCS Loops—MODE 4 satisfy Criterion 4 of 10 CFR 50.36 (Ref. 1).

LCO The purpose of this LCO is to require that at least two loops be OPERABLE in MODE 4 and that one of these loops be in operation. The LCO allows the two loops that are required to be OPERABLE to consist of any combination of RCS loops and RHR loops. Any one loop in operation provides enough flow to remove the decay heat from the core with forced circulation. An additional loop is required to be OPERABLE to provide redundancy for heat removal.

BASES

LCO (continued)

Note 1 permits all RCPs or RHR pumps to be de-energized for ≤ 1 hour per 8 hour period. The purpose of the Note is to permit tests that are designed to validate various accident analyses values. One of the tests performed during the startup testing program is the validation of rod drop times during cold conditions, both with and without flow. The no flow test may be performed in MODE 3, 4, or 5 and requires that the pumps be stopped for a short period of time. The Note permits the de-energizing of the pumps in order to perform this test and validate the assumed analysis values. If changes are made to the RCS that would cause a change to the flow characteristics of the RCS, the input values must be revalidated by conducting the test again. The 1 hour time period is adequate to perform the test, and operating experience has shown that boron stratification is not a problem during this short period with no forced flow.

Utilization of Note 1 is permitted provided the following conditions are met along with any other conditions imposed by initial startup test procedures:

- a. No operations are permitted that would dilute the RCS boron concentration with coolant with boron concentrations less than required to meet SDM of LCO 3.1.1 and maintain $K_{eff} < 0.99$, therefore maintaining an adequate margin to criticality. Boron reduction with coolant of boron concentrations less than required to assure SDM and maintain $K_{eff} < 0.99$ is prohibited because a uniform concentration distribution throughout the RCS cannot be ensured when in natural circulation; and
- b. Core outlet temperature is maintained at least 10°F below saturation temperature, so that no vapor bubble may form and possibly cause a natural circulation flow obstruction.

Note 2 requires that the secondary side water temperature of each SG be $\leq 50^{\circ}\text{F}$ above each of the RCS cold leg temperatures or that pressurizer water volume be $< 92\%$ (1600 ft^3) before the start of an RCP with any RCS cold leg temperature $\leq 300^{\circ}\text{F}$. This restraint is to prevent a low temperature overpressure event due to a thermal transient when an RCP is started.

An OPERABLE RCS loop comprises an OPERABLE RCP and an OPERABLE SG, which has the minimum water level specified in SR 3.4.6.2. The water level is maintained by an OPERABLE AFW train in accordance with LCO 3.7.5, "Auxiliary Feedwater System."

Similarly for the RHR System, an OPERABLE RHR loop comprises an OPERABLE RHR pump capable of providing forced flow to an OPERABLE RHR heat exchanger. RCPs and RHR pumps are

BASES

LCO (continued)

OPERABLE if they are capable of being powered and are able to provide forced flow if required.

APPLICABILITY

In MODE 4, this LCO ensures forced circulation of the reactor coolant to remove decay heat from the core and to provide proper boron mixing. One loop of either RCS or RHR provides sufficient circulation for these purposes. However, two loops consisting of any combination of RCS and RHR loops are required to be OPERABLE to meet single failure considerations.

Operation in other MODES is covered by:

LCO 3.4.4, "RCS Loops—MODES 1 and 2";
LCO 3.4.5, "RCS Loops—MODE 3";
LCO 3.4.7, "RCS Loops—MODE 5, Loops Filled";
LCO 3.4.8, "RCS Loops—MODE 5, Loops Not Filled";
LCO 3.4.17, "RCS Loops—Test Exceptions";
LCO 3.9.5, "Residual Heat Removal (RHR) and Coolant Circulation—High Water Level" (MODE 6); and
LCO 3.9.6, "Residual Heat Removal (RHR) and Coolant Circulation—Low Water Level" (MODE 6).

ACTIONS

A.1

If only one RCS loop is OPERABLE and two RHR loops are inoperable, redundancy for heat removal is lost. Action must be initiated to restore a second RCS or RHR loop to OPERABLE status. The immediate Completion Time reflects the importance of maintaining the availability of two paths for heat removal.

B.1

If only one RHR loop is OPERABLE and in operation and there are no RCS loops OPERABLE, an inoperable RCS or RHR loop must be restored to OPERABLE status to provide a redundant means for decay heat removal.

If the parameters that are outside the limits cannot be restored, the unit must be brought to MODE 5 within 24 hours. Bringing the unit to MODE 5 is a conservative action with regard to decay heat removal. With only one RHR loop OPERABLE, redundancy for decay heat removal is lost and, in the event of a loss of the remaining RHR loop, it would be safer to initiate that loss from MODE 5 ($\leq 200^{\circ}\text{F}$) rather than MODE 4 (200 to $< 350^{\circ}\text{F}$). The Completion Time of 24 hours is a reasonable time, based on operating experience, to reach MODE 5 from MODE 4 in an orderly manner and without challenging plant systems.

BASES

ACTIONS (continued)

C.1 and C.2

If no loop is OPERABLE or in operation, except during conditions permitted by Note 1 in the LCO section, all operations involving introduction of coolant into the RCS with boron concentration less than required to meet SDM of LCO 3.1.1 and maintain $K_{eff} < 0.99$ must be suspended and action to restore one RCS or RHR loop to OPERABLE status and operation must be initiated. The required margin to criticality must not be reduced in this type of operation. Suspending the introduction of coolant into the RCS of coolant with boron concentration less than required to meet the minimum SDM of LCO 3.1.1 and maintains $K_{eff} < 0.99$ is required to assure continued safe operation. With coolant added without forced circulation, unmixed coolant could be introduced to the core, however, coolant added with boron concentration meeting the minimum SDM and K_{eff} requirements maintains acceptable margin to criticality. The immediate Completion Times reflect the importance of maintaining operation for decay heat removal. The action to restore must be continued until one loop is restored to OPERABLE status and operation.

SURVEILLANCE
REQUIREMENTSSR 3.4.6.1

This SR requires verification that one RCS or RHR loop is in operation. Verification includes flow rate, temperature, or pump status monitoring, which help ensure that forced flow is providing heat removal. The Surveillance Frequency is based on operating experience, equipment reliability, and plant risk and is controlled under the Surveillance Frequency Control Program.

SR 3.4.6.2

SR 3.4.6.2 requires verification of SG OPERABILITY. SG OPERABILITY is verified by ensuring that the secondary side narrow range water level is $\geq 12\%$. If the SG secondary side narrow range water level is $< 12\%$, the tubes may become uncovered and the associated loop may not be capable of providing the heat sink necessary for removal of decay heat. The Surveillance Frequency is based on operating experience, equipment reliability, and plant risk and is controlled under the Surveillance Frequency Control Program.

SR 3.4.6.3

Verification that the required pump is OPERABLE ensures that an additional RCS or RHR pump can be placed in operation, if needed, to

BASES

SURVEILLANCE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

maintain decay heat removal and reactor coolant circulation. Verification is performed by verifying proper breaker alignment and power available to the required pump. The Surveillance Frequency is based on operating experience, equipment reliability, and plant risk and is controlled under the Surveillance Frequency Control Program.

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- REFERENCES 1. 10 CFR 50.36, Technical Specifications, (c)(2)(ii).