NRR-PMDAPEm Resource

From: Lyon, Fred
Sent: Sunday, May 17, 2015 6:17 PM
To: Lyon, Fred; HANSHER, BILL R
Cc: SIMPKIN, TERRENCE W; EDWARDS, MICHAEL L; CORTOPASSI, LOUIS P; WILSON, JEFFREY L; GOODMAN, HARRY A; MAASSEN, KRISTEN G; MCMANIS, JOE L; Alley, David; Markley, Michael; Wilson, George; Hagar, Bob
Subject: Verbal Authorization for Relief Request RR-14

By telecon on May 17, 2015, David Alley and Michael Markley, et al., of the NRC staff, provided verbal authorization for RR-14 to Lou Cortopassi, Jeff Wilson, et al., of the OPPD staff for FCS:

VERBAL AUTHORIZATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION RELIEF REQUEST -14 ALTERNATE INSPECTION OF REACTOR VESSEL CLOSURE HEAD PENETRATION NOZZLES FT CALHOUN STATION, UNIT 1 OMAHA PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT DOCKET NO. 50-285

By letter to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) dated May 9, 2015, as supplemented by letters dated May 13, 16 and 17, 2015, Omaha Public Power District (the licensee) submitted Relief Request -14 for the inspection of reactor vessel head nozzles at Fort Calhoun Station, Unit 1. In Relief Request-14, the licensee proposed to use alternative inspection requirements for reactor vessel head nozzles with respect to American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Code Case N-729-1 as conditioned in 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)(D) until the end of operating cycle 28 or until a degraded reactor vessel head nozzle is detected.

The NRC staff reviewed the licensee's results of current bare metal visual examinations of the reactor vessel head nozzles, the potential of nozzle ejection and reactor vessel head degradation resulting from the boric acid corrosion, and the proposed inspection plan that the licensee will be performing in the next refueling outage in Fall 2016.

The NRC staff finds that:

1. The licensee has demonstrated that nozzle ejection and reactor vessel head degradation are not likely in the next fuel cycle.

2. The licensee's bare metal visual examinations did not identify any areas of significant corrosion,

3. The licensee has demonstrated that there was an alternate possible source other than nozzle leakage for the relevant condition for each of the nozzles for which relief is requested.

4. The licensee's chemistry analysis provided some additional supporting information for leakage sources other than possible nozzle leakage

5. The licensee will use administrative controls such that at an unidentified leak rate increase of greater than 0.1 gallons per minute above stable baseline, actions will be taken to identify the source of leakage. If the source is not identified within 24 hours, actions will be taken to shutdown the plant.

6. The licensee will perform a bare metal visual examination of all reactor vessel head nozzles in accordance with ASME Code Case N-729-1 on the first cold shutdown of greater than 72 hours that occurs after at least 4 months of operation.

7. For the Fall 2016 inspection, the licensee will perform bare metal visual examinations in combination with ultrasonic examinations or surface examinations of all reactor vessel head nozzles in accordance with ASME Code Case N-729-1 as conditioned in 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)(D).

Based on the above, the NRC staff has determined that the proposed alternative inspection performed in Spring 2015 provides reasonable assurance that the structural integrity of the reactor vessel head and attached nozzles will be maintained until the next refueling outage, which is scheduled for Fall 2016.

The NRC staff concludes that Relief Request-14 will provide reasonable assurance of the structural integrity of the reactor vessel head and attached nozzles. The NRC staff concludes that complying with the specified inspection in accordance with ASME Code Case N-729-1 would result in hardship or unusual difficulty without a compensating increase in the level of quality and safety. Accordingly, the NRC staff concludes that the licensee has adequately addressed all of the regulatory requirements set forth in 10 CFR 50.55a(z)(2) and is in compliance with the requirements of the ASME Code, Section XI, ASME Code Case N-729-1 as conditioned by 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)(D). Therefore, on May 17, 2015, as authorized by David Alley, Chief, Component Performance, Non-Destructive Examination, and Testing Branch, and Michael Markley, Chief, Plant Licensing Branch IV-1, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, the NRC authorizes the use of Relief Request-14 at Fort Calhoun Station, Unit 1 until the end of operating cycle 28, scheduled for Fall 2016, or until a degraded reactor vessel head nozzle is detected.

All other requirements of ASME Code, Section XI, and 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)(D) for which relief was not specifically requested and authorized by the NRC staff remain applicable, including the third party review by the Authorized Nuclear In-service Inspector.

This verbal authorization does not preclude the NRC staff from asking additional clarification questions regarding Relief Request RR-14 while preparing the subsequent written safety evaluation.

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