

March 9, 2017

Mr. Brian H. Whitley, Director
Regulatory Affairs
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
42 Inverness Center Parkway
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Birmingham, AL 35242

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE REVIEW OF SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY'S
REQUEST FOR LICENSE AMENDMENT (LAR 17-003) AND EXEMPTION FOR
THE VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT UNITS 3 AND 4: HYDROGEN
VENTING FROM PASSIVE CORE COOLING SYSTEM (PXS) COMPARTMENTS
(CAC NO. RP9611)

Dear Mr. Whitley:

By letter dated February 22, 2017 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML17053A425, Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC) submitted a request for a license amendment and an exemption to Combined License Numbers NPF-91 and NPF-92, for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant Units 3 and 4, respectively. The amendment request proposes to revise the licensing basis information to reflect changes to the locations of the hydrogen venting primary openings in the PXS valve/accumulator rooms inside containment.

SNC has also requested an exemption from the provisions of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 52, Appendix D, Section III.B, "Design Certification Rule for the AP1000 Design, Scope and Contents," to allow a departure from the elements of the certification information in Tier 1 of the generic Design Control Document.

The purpose of this letter is to provide the results of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff's acceptance review of these requests. 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 reviews. 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 the 10 CFR, an amendment to the license must fully describe the changes requested, and follow as far as applicable, the form prescribed for original applications. Section 52.79 of the 10 CFR addresses 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.

B. Whitley

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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 and exemption, 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 may be 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.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (301) 415-2809 or Paul.Kallan@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Paul Kallan, Senior Project Manager
Licensing Branch 4
Division of New Reactor Licensing
Office of New Reactors

Docket Nos.: 52-025
52-026

cc: See next page

ACCEPTANCE REVIEW OF SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY'S REQUEST FOR LICENSE AMENDMENT (LAR 17-003) AND EXEMPTION FOR THE VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT UNITS 3 AND 4: HYDROGEN VENTING FROM PASSIVE CORE COOLING SYSTEM (PXS) COMPARTMENTS (CAC NO. RP9611) DATED MARCH 9, 2017

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(Revised 02/07/2017)

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