

March 8, 1999

Mr. James M. Levine
Senior Vice President, Nuclear
Arizona Public Service Company
Post Office Box 53999
Phoenix, Arizona 85072-3999

SUBJECT: ASME CODE ALTERNATIVE REQUEST FOR THE PALO VERDE NUCLEAR
GENERATING STATION (TAC NOS. MA2166, MA2167 AND MA2168)

Dear Mr. Levine:

By letter dated June 25, 1998, as supplemented by letters dated July 10 and July 17, 1998, and March 5, 1999, Arizona Public Service Company (APS or the licensee) requested NRC approval of a proposed alternative to Section III of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code in accordance with 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3) for Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (PVNGS), Units 1, 2 and 3.

The licensee's proposed alternative is part of a design modification to the chemical and volume control system to improve overall system performance. To accomplish this, the licensee plans to replace the existing flow sensors with Coriolis type flow detectors, which are capable of reliably measuring low flow rates. The proposed flow detection instrument is not currently available as an ASME Code, Section III instrument, which is required pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(e) for Quality Group C components. The licensee has taken steps to ensure that the level of quality associated with the flow detector design, manufacture, and testing is comparable to an ASME Code, Section III, Class 3 instrument. The licensee's basis for requesting staff approval pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3) is that the proposed alternative provides an acceptable level of quality and safety.

Based on the enclosed safety evaluation, the staff concludes that APS has provided an acceptable alternative to the replacement requirements of Section III of the ASME Code. Therefore, the licensee's proposed alternative provides an acceptable level of quality and safety and is authorized pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3)(i).

If you have any questions, please contact Mel B. Fields at (301) 415-3062.

Sincerely,
Original Signed By
William H. Bateman, Project Director
Project Directorate IV-2
Division of Reactor Projects - III/IV
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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PDR ADOCK 05000528
P PDR

Docket Nos. STN 50-528, STN 50-529
and STN 50-530

Enclosure: Safety Evaluation

cc w/encl: See next page

DOCUMENT NAME: PV-ASME *For previous concurrences see attached ORC

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Mr. James M. Levine

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March 8, 1999

cc w/encl:

Mr. Steve Olea
Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Mr. David Summers
Public Service Company of New Mexico
414 Silver SW, #1206
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

Douglas Kent Porter
Senior Counsel
Southern California Edison Company
Law Department, Generation Resources
P.O. Box 800
Rosemead, California 91770

Mr. Jarlath Curran
Southern California Edison Company
5000 Pacific Coast Hwy Bldg DIN
San Clemente, California 92672

Senior Resident Inspector
USNRC
P. O. Box 40
Buckeye, Arizona 85326

Mr. Robert Henry
Salt River Project
6504 East Thomas Road
Scottsdale, Arizona 85251

Regional Administrator, Region IV
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Harris Tower & Pavillion
611 Ryan Plaza Drive, Suite 400
Arlington, Texas 76011-8064

Terry Bassham, Esq.
General Counsel
El Paso Electric Company
123 W. Mills
El Paso, Texas 79901

Chairman, Board of Supervisors
ATTN: Chairman
301 W. Jefferson, 10th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

Mr. John Schumann
Los Angeles Department of Water & Power
Southern California Public Power Authority
P.O. Box 51111, Room 1255-C
Los Angeles, California 90051

Mr. Aubrey V. Godwin, Director
Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency
4814 South 40 Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85040

Ms. Angela K. Krainik, Manager
Nuclear Licensing
Arizona Public Service Company
P.O. Box 52034
Phoenix, Arizona 85072-2034

Mr. John C. Horne, Vice President
Power Supply
El Paso Electric Company
2025 N. Third Street, Suite 220
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

