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SUBJECT: Provides PM rept as required by Condition G of TS LCO 3.3.3.1,PAMI & AC TS 5.6.6.Rept informs that Unit 2 high range primary containment RM,2-RM-90-273C has been inoperable for more than seven days.

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Tennessee Valley Authority, Post Office Box 2000, Decatur, Alabama 35609-2000

December 31, 1998

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Gentlemen:

In the Matter of) Docket No. 50-260
Tennessee Valley Authority

BROWNS FERRY NUCLEAR PLANT (BFN) - POST ACCIDENT MONITORING (PAM) INSTRUMENTATION REPORT ON INOPERABLE HIGH RANGE PRIMARY CONTAINMENT RADIATION MONITOR

TVA is providing this PAM report as required by Condition G of Technical Specification (TS) Limiting Condition for Operation 3.3.3.1, Post Accident Monitoring Instrumentation, and Administrative Controls TS 5.6.6. This report informs NRC that a Unit 2 High Range Primary Containment Radiation Monitor (HRPCRM), 2-RM-90-273C, has been inoperable for more than seven days.

HRPCRM 2-RM-90-273C is located in the drywell on Elevation 582 feet. The primary purpose of the monitor is to provide hi-range monitoring capabilities which are used to indicate the area radiation conditions within the primary containment during accident situations.

On December 15, 1998, HRPCRM 2-RM-90-273C was declared inoperable due to a downscale indication. Extensive trouble

shooting has determined that the inoperability of the monitor is due to a failure inside the drywell. Although able to alleviate the downscale indication on 2-RM-90-273C during the trouble shooting activities, plant personnel were not able to complete trouble shooting and corrective actions. During power operations the drywell atmosphere is inerted and high radiation levels are present. Hence, additional maintenance activities within the drywell are not possible.

Containment radiation monitor 2-RM-90-273A will be utilized as a planned alternate method of monitoring until HRPCRM 2-RM-90-273C can be returned to operable status. This monitor provides accurate indication of radiological conditions inside the drywell up to 10^6 rad/hour. Monitors 2-RM-90-273C and 2-RM-90-273A are similar from the standpoint that both receive their input from detectors that are monitoring the drywell atmosphere and that both detectors are designed for readings up to 10^7 rad/hour. Monitors 2-RM-90-273C and 2-RM-90-273A are different due to the fact that the signal from 2-RM-90-273C is processed by a Victoreen drawer and indicates readings up to 10^7 rad/hour while the signal from 2-RM-90-273A is processed by a GEMAC drawer and indicates readings up to 10^6 rad/hour. While 2-RM-90-273A does not indicate readings above 10^6 rad/hour, alternative means can be used to monitor the detector output and obtain the readings above 10^6 rad/hour, if the need arises. Additionally, the Post-Accident Sampling system provides a redundant method for detecting gross fuel failures, through both the sampling of primary system coolant and the containment atmosphere.

On October 31, 1997, 2-RM-90-272C was declared inoperable due to a downscale indication. Accordingly, TVA provided a special report detailing the failure of this radiation monitor in a letter to NRC on November 14, 1997, Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant Special Report On Inoperable High Range Primary Containment Radiation Monitor. Although both HRPCRMs 2-RM-90-272C and 2-RM-90-273C are operating erratically, they

are providing some indication of current drywell conditions. However, because of erratic operation of these detectors, TVA does not consider them operable.

TVA plans to make appropriate repairs to both 2-RM-90-273C and 2-RM-90-272C the next time BFN has a forced Unit 2 outage of sufficient duration in which the drywell is entered, or the next Unit 2 refueling outage (currently scheduled for April of 1999), whichever comes first.

There are no commitments contained in this letter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (256) 729-2636.

Sincerely,

T. E. Abney
Manager of Licensing
and Industry Affairs

cc: See Page 4

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