



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

September 21, 2018

Mr. Brian H. Whitely
Director Regulatory Affairs
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
3535 Colonnade Parkway, Bin N-226-EC
Birmingham, AL 35243

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE REVIEW OF SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY'S
LICENSE AMENDMENT AND EXEMPTION REQUEST FOR THE VOGTLE
ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT UNITS 3 AND 4: REACTOR COOLANT
SYSTEM (RCS) FLOW COASTDOWN (LAR 18-025)

Mr. Whitely:

By letter dated August 31, 2018 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession No. ML18243A459), Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC/licensee) submitted a license amendment request (LAR) 18-022 for Combined License (COL) Numbers NPF-91 and NPF-92, for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (VEGP) Units 3 and 4, respectively. The requested amendment includes changes in the form of departures from information in the Updated Final Safety Analysis Report (UFSAR) (which includes the plant-specific Design Control Document (DCD) Tier 2 information) and involves related changes to plant-specific Tier 1 information, with corresponding changes to the associated COL Appendix C information. Specifically, license amendment proposes changes to revise the test acceptance criterion for reactor coolant system flow coastdown to reflect the test conditions rather than safety analysis conditions.

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 this amendment request. 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 review. 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 Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), an amendment to the license must fully describe the changes requested, and following 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.

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 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.

SNC has requested NRC staff approval of this LAR by March 2, 2019. As we agreed, the staff intends to complete this action by March 2, 2019 as requested, unless we agree to a different date at a later time due to circumstances beyond our control. The staff estimates that it may take 140 staff hours to complete this licensing action.

If you have any questions, please contact Senior Project Manager, Peter Hearn, at (301) 415-1189 or Peter.Hearn@NRC.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Peter Hearn Senior Project Manager
Licensing Branch 4 (LB4)
Division of Licensing, Siting
and Environmental Analysis
Office of New Reactors

Docket No(s). 52-025
52-026