



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

April 25, 1994

Docket No. 50-333

Mr. William J. Cahill  
Executive Vice President, Nuclear  
Generation  
Power Authority of the State of  
New York  
123 Main Street  
White Plains, New York 10601

Dear Mr. Cahill:

SUBJECT: PRIMARY CONTAINMENT PRESSURE LIMIT AT THE JAMES A. FITZPATRICK  
NUCLEAR POWER PLANT (TAC NO. M85793)

The NRC approved Revision 4 of the Boiling Water Reactors Owners Group (BWROG) Emergency Procedure Guidelines (EPGs) in a Safety Evaluation Report (SER) dated September 12, 1988. Within the SER, the NRC staff stated that:

The staffs' stated goal is to limit venting to a "last resort" action. The major staff concern has centered on the appropriate containment pressure for venting. As a result, the venting pressure should be established as high as reasonably achievable. If the Primary Containment Pressure Limit (PCPL) is less than the design pressure, the licensee must submit justification and the staff will evaluate on a case-by-case basis. Accordingly, a reasonable effort should be made by each licensee to increase the primary containment pressure limit as high as practical, e.g., perform adjustments to the pneumatic operating pressure of the SRVs [safety/relief valves], and consideration for improving vent valve operability.

By letter dated September 25, 1990, the Power Authority of the State of New York (PASNY) notified the NRC staff that the PCPL adopted in the FitzPatrick Emergency Operating Procedures was 44 psig. PASNY also provided their basis for setting the PCPL below the primary containment design pressure (56 psig). Specifically, the PCPL value was chosen based on the capability (44 psig) of the containment ventilation exhaust isolation valves. Based on a review of this letter, the NRC staff determined that PASNY had not provided sufficient rationale for setting the PCPL below the containment design pressure. The staff subsequently issued a request for additional information (RAI) in a letter dated March 1, 1993.

By letter dated June 1, 1993, PASNY provided its response to the stated RAI. Within this letter, PASNY stated that the containment ventilation exhaust valves had been modified to increase the pressure at which they can be opened and closed to 62 psig. Further, PASNY committed to revise the emergency operating procedures to raise the PCPL above the containment design pressure

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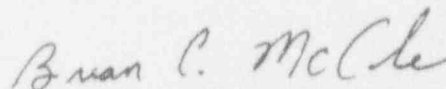
of 56 psig by June 30, 1994. PASNY indicated that the precise value of the PCPL would be computed in accordance with the BWROG guidance using a vent valve operability pressure of 62 psig.

The NRC staff has reviewed PASNY's letter dated June 1, 1993, and concludes that once the stated commitment is satisfied, the FitzPatrick PCPL will be in accordance with that approved in the NRC staff's SER of the BWROG EPGs dated September 12, 1988. Please notify the NRC, in writing, within 30 days of completion of the actions associated with this commitment.

This requirement affects one respondent and, therefore, is not subject to Office of Management and Budget review under P.L. 96.511.

This action completes the NRC review efforts associated with TAC No. M85793.

Sincerely,



Brian C. McCabe, Senior Project Manager  
Project Directorate I-1  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

cc: See next page

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Original signed by:

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Project Directorate I-1  
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

cc: See next page

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