

MAR 18 1982

Docket No.: 50-395

MEMORANDUM FOR: Atomic Safety and Licensing Board for Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station, Unit No. 1

FROM: Robert L. Tedesco, Assistant Director for Licensing, DL

SUBJECT: BOARD NOTIFICATION - POSSIBLE CHANGE OF POSITION BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY ON THE LOCALIZATION OF THE 1886 CHARLESTON, S. C. EARTHQUAKE (BM NO. 82-22)

The Extreme External Phenomena Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS) sponsored a two day meeting held on January 28-29, 1982 to hear presentations by prominent earth scientists throughout the U. S. who are engaged in seismic and geologic research. During the seminar much time was spent discussing the geology and seismicity of the Charleston, South Carolina region. In past licensing decisions, the NRC staff has assumed, based primarily on recommendations from the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS), that the relatively high seismicity in the Charleston area, including the 1886 Intensity X Charleston Earthquake would not recur anywhere but in the Charleston area.

Geologic and seismic research, funded by the NRC and carried out by the USGS, has been ongoing in the Charleston area since 1973. In reviewing the Virgil C. Summer OL-SAR, the NRC staff and the USGS considered all of the information available at that time and reaffirmed our original CP-SER conclusion.

No significant new information was presented at the January 28-29 ACRS Subcommittee meeting that was not considered in our evaluation of the Virgil C. Summer Nuclear Station, but the USGS stated that it was reviewing its position on the Charleston earthquake. The USGS review could result in one of the following three positions or some other alternative: (1) A Charleston-type event could only occur in the Charleston area - a reconfirmation of their past position; (2) A Charleston-type event is more likely to occur at Charleston than elsewhere, but is not unique to the Charleston area; (3) A Charleston-type event could occur throughout the eastern seaboard as there is nothing unique to the Charleston area.

The NRC staff continues to support its position stated in the Virgil C. Summer OL-SER pending any new position statement by the USGS, which we expect to receive in the future.

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A more detailed discussion of the NRC staff position on this matter is presented in Commission Paper (SECY-82-53), a copy of which is attached. We will notify you immediately upon receipt of the USGS position.

Original signed by
Robert L. Tedesco

Robert L. Tedesco, Assistant Director
for Licensing
Division of Licensing

Enclosure:
As stated

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DISTRIBUTION OF BOARD NOTIFICATION
(Re possible change of position of 1886
South Charleston earthquake)

Summer (ASLB)

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