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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION

RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 15 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-8

ALABAMA POWER COMPANY

JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCELAR PLANT, UNIT NO. 2

DOCKET NO. 50-364

Introduction

By letter dated April 28, 1982, which confirmed an Alabama Power Company (APCo) telecopy request of the same day, APCo requested a one-time Technical Specification change to License No. NPF-8 for Farley Unit 2. The change would allow an additional three hours outage time for certain rod control system position indicators.

Background

Technical Specification 3.1.3.1 requires that full length (shutdown and control) rods be operable and positioned within ± 12 steps (indicated position) of their group step counter demand position. Action Statement b. requires the plant to be in HOT STANDBY within 6 hours if Technical Specification 3.1.3.1 is not met. During surveillance tests late on the night of April 26, 1982 electrical circuitry problems arose which precluded insertion of the Group 1 rods of Control Banks A and C. Troubleshooting and retesting would be required to resolve the problem.

Alabama Power Company (APCo) personnel notified the NRC staff by telephone of the problem during the early morning of April 28, 1982. Subsequently, by telecopy letter dated April 28, 1982, APCo requested a one-time extension of the Limiting Condition of Operation 3.1.3.1 Action Statement b. from six hours to nine hours to allow enough time to continue troubleshooting of the electrical circuitry, make repairs and retest the system.

Discussion and Evaluation

The NRC staff evaluated the information provided by APCo and determined the following:

1. Our confidence was high that the control rods could be tripped, if required, either automatically or manually. This confidence was based on APCo's report that only the electrical circuitry for the manual stepping of rods in the inward direction was affected. The slave cycler step counter card was later found to be the defective component, thus, reactor trip capability existed as we analyzed previously.

2. The rods being tested are normally in the fully withdrawn position and do not affect core power distribution. The only time the system would be needed would be for a controlled manual shutdown by rod insertion. Such action was not planned at this time.

3. Troubleshooting had been underway for several hours when it was found that more time than six hours allowed by TS's would be required to repair and retest. The problem had been pinpointed to only Group 1 rods of three rod groups (Shutdown A, Control Banks A and B) which failed to move inward upon demand.

4. We had confidence that repairs and retests would be completed within a maximum of three hours beyond the 6-hour limit. For the short period of time involved, we considered that the risk to the health and safety of the public was unaffected.

Based on the considerations noted above, and since additional shutdown capability existed by boron dilution, we conclude that there was no undue risk to the health and safety of the public by this action. Our action at this time is only for record purposes to document in the license the authorization previously given verbally on April 28, 1982 and documented by letter dated April 30, 1982.

Environmental Consideration

We have determined that the amendment does not authorize a change in effluent types or total amounts nor an increase in power level and will not result in any significant environmental impact. Having made this determination, we have further concluded that the amendment involves an action which is insignificant from the standpoint of environmental impact and, pursuant to 10 CFR §51.5(d)(4), that an environmental impact statement or negative declaration and environmental impact appraisal need not be prepared in connection with the issuance of this amendment.

Conclusion

We have concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) because the amendment does not involve a significant increase in the probability or consequences of an accident previously evaluated, does not create the possibility of an accident of a type different from any evaluated previously, and does not involve a significant reduction in a margin of safety, the amendment does not involve a significant hazards consideration, (2) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, and (3) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations and the issuance of this amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

Date: August 17, 1982

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