



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

October 4, 1990

Docket No. 50-309

Mr. C. D. Frizzle, President
Maine Yankee Atomic Power Company
83 Edison Drive
Augusta, Maine 04336

Dear Mr. Frizzle:

SUBJECT: MAINE YANKEE ATOMIC POWER PLANT - TEMPORARY WAIVER OF COMPLIANCE
FROM TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION 3.22, "FEEDWATER TRIP SYSTEM"

By letter dated October 3, 1990, you informed the NRC that Maine Yankee's existing Technical Specifications contained an ambiguity regarding feedwater trip system requirements during startup and shutdown. As a result, operation of the emergency feedwater system in the startup mode, utilizing the first stage feedwater heaters to obtain feedwater preheating, is not currently permitted by Technical Specifications, since operation in this mode is vulnerable to single failure for feedwater isolation requirements in the event of a main steam line break accident. Since operation of the emergency feedwater system with feedwater heating is necessary during startup to minimize thermal stresses imposed on the steam generator feedwater ring and piping, you requested a temporary waiver of compliance for Technical Specification 3.22, "Feedwater Trip System." We understand that plant startup is planned for October 4, 1990.

In the startup mode, the emergency feedwater pumps are cross-connected with the main feedwater system. Feedwater flow is directed to the first stage feedwater preheaters, through the main feedwater regulating bypass valves and to each of the three steam generators. While in the startup alignment, the bypass valve in each line would automatically isolate feedwater flow in the event of a low pressure condition in the associated steam generator, however failure of a single bypass valve could permit continued feeding of a faulted steam generator. A Maine Yankee safety evaluation, which specifically evaluated this single failure vulnerability, concluded that continued feeding of a steam generator undergoing a steam line break while feeding from the emergency feedwater system through the first stage feedwater point heaters will not result in a return to criticality or a containment overpressure condition. Since the basis for design of the feedwater trip system is to limit the flow of cold feedwater into the steam generators in the event of a main steam line break, thereby limiting reactivity insertion, Maine Yankee concluded that no safety concern exists. A copy of the Maine Yankee safety evaluation was enclosed with your letter of October 3, 1990. The staff has reviewed the safety evaluation and agrees with your conclusion that no safety concern exists.

Based on the above considerations, we believe that a waiver of compliance to permit operation of the emergency feedwater pumps with flow through the first stage feedwater heaters below two percent reactor power is justified. We

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therefore grant a temporary waiver of compliance. The expiration date of this waiver is January 15, 1991.

While this temporary waiver of compliance is in effect, we understand that you will ensure that compensatory measures to limit the flow of cold feedwater into the steam generators in the event of a main steam line break will be implemented. In addition, a license amendment to clarify the Technical Specifications regarding feedwater trip system requirements during startup and shutdown should be expeditiously submitted for our review.

Your letter of October 3, 1990, together with our review of your safety evaluation, constitutes the basis for this waiver of compliance. Our review was performed by Charles S. Marschall, Senior Resident Inspector.

Sincerely,

/s/

Bruce A. Boger
Assistant Director for Region I Reactors
Division of Reactor Projects - I/II
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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Mr. C. D. Frizzle

Maine Yankee

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