



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

JUL 2 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Thomas E. Murley, Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

FROM: William T. Russell, Regional Administrator, Region I

SUBJECT: NINE MILE POINT UNIT 2 FULL POWER LICENSE RECOMMENDATION

This memorandum updates my May 20, 1987 memorandum to you regarding an Initial Criticality recommendation of Nine Mile Point Unit 2 (NMP2) and provides the Region I recommendation for issuance of a Full Power Operating License for NMP2. This recommendation is based upon the following:

- ° Successful completion of essentially all activities authorized by the low power operating license including initial criticality on May 23, 1987 and subsequent low power physics tests, routine surveillance testing, heatup phase testing and operations at less than five percent power.
- ° Around-the-clock coverage by the resident inspectors of the final three days of preparations for initial criticality as well as observations of criticality, and selected inspection coverage of other events by the resident and Region I staff.
- ° Satisfactory resolution of a late allegation regarding possible improper welding by a former licensee contractor. Licensee records were reviewed by a Region I construction senior resident inspector and a Region I NDE specialist on June 30, 1987.
- ° Plant operations under the low power operating license have been conducted carefully and safely with appropriate procedural and management controls in place to govern higher power operations. The basis for this conclusion includes the results of inspections by the three assigned resident inspectors for NMP2, inspection coverage by region-based specialist inspectors from both the Division of Reactor Safety and the Division of Radiation Safety and Safeguards, and by an Operational Readiness Team Inspection. The Operational Readiness Team Inspection provided about 16 man-weeks of independent assessment by four experienced senior resident inspectors (from both Region I and Region III), an operator licensing examiner, an experienced test programs specialist, an NRR project manager, a senior radiation specialist, a reactor engineer, and an NRC consultant (ex senior resident inspector).
- ° These inspections covered procedure adequacy and adherence, operator knowledge and understanding of procedures, equipment, and Technical Specifications, shift turnover and control room atmosphere and discipline.


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As of July 1, 1987 the reactor had been made subcritical while problems with the reactor water cleanup pump seals and turbine electro-hydraulic control system pressure controllers were being corrected by the licensee. Also troubleshooting was in progress with the Redundant Reactivity Control System (RRCS) by the licensee with assistance of General Electric Company system specialists. Although the RRCS has been demonstrated to be operable via surveillance testing, several unexplained system actuations have occurred. These problems have delayed completion of the remaining heatup phase testing including a manual scram, final tuning of the Reactor Core Isolation Cooling system, and MSIV closure testing.

As discussed at the commission briefing on July 1, 1987, the licensee has also committed to perform a Self Assessment of the Nine Mile Point Unit 2 power ascension program to evaluate operations and support through test condition number 2 (about 50% Power), and to meet with the NRC staff to discuss the results. We also plan to perform our own assessment of their performance and to discuss the results with the licensee prior to further testing.

In conclusion, Region I recommends issuance of the Full Power Operating License for Nine Mile Point Unit 2.


William T. Russell
Regional Administrator

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