



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

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 93 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-2
AND AMENDMENT NO. 86 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-8

SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY, INC.
JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2
DOCKET NOS. 50-348 AND 50-364

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated December 11, 1991, the Alabama Power Company submitted a request for changes to the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant (Farley), Units 1 and 2, Technical Specifications (TS). The requested changes would remove the provision of TS 4.0.2 that limits the combined time interval for three consecutive surveillances to less than 3.25 times the specified interval. Guidance on this proposed change to the TS was provided to all power reactor licensees and applicants by Generic Letter 89-14, "Line-Item Improvements in Technical Specifications - Removal of the 3.25 Limit on Extending Surveillance Intervals," dated August 21, 1989.

2.0 EVALUATION

Technical Specification 4.0 includes the provision that allows a surveillance interval to be extended by 25 percent of the specified time interval. This extension provides flexibility for scheduling the performance of surveillances and permits consideration of plant operating conditions that may not be suitable for conducting a surveillance at the specified time interval. Such operating conditions include transient plant operating or ongoing surveillance or maintenance activities. Specification 4.0.2 further limits the allowance for extending surveillance intervals by requiring the combined time interval for any three consecutive surveillances not exceed 3.25 times the specified time interval. The purpose of this provision is to assure surveillances are not extended repeatedly as an operational convenience to provide an overall increase in the surveillance interval.

Experience has shown that the 18-month surveillance interval with the provision to extend it by 25 percent is usually sufficient to accommodate normal variations in the length of a fuel cycle. However, the NRC staff has routinely granted requests for one-time exceptions to the 3.25 limit on extending refueling surveillances because the risk to safety is low in contrast to the alternative of a forced shutdown to perform these surveillances. Therefore, the 3.25 limitation on extending surveillances has not been a practical limit on the use

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of the 25-percent allowance for extending surveillances that are performed on a refueling outage basis.

Extending surveillance intervals during plant operation can also result in a benefit to safety when a scheduled surveillance is due at a time that is not suitable for conducting the surveillance. This may occur when transient plant operating conditions exist or when safety systems are out of service for maintenance or other surveillance activities. In such cases, the benefit to safety of extending a surveillance interval would exceed any safety benefit derived by limiting the use of the 25-percent allowance to extend a surveillance. Furthermore, there is the administrative burden associated with tracking the use of the 25-percent allowance to ensure compliance with the 3.25 limit.

In view of these considerations, the staff concluded that Specification 4.0.2 should be changed to remove the 3.25 limit for all surveillances because its removal will have an overall positive effect on safety. This conclusion is consistent with the guidance provided in Generic Letter 89-14.

In addition, the Bases of this specification were updated to reflect this change and noted that it is not the intent of the allowance for extending surveillance intervals that it be used repeatedly merely as an operational convenience to extend surveillance intervals beyond that specified.

3.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the State of Alabama official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendments. The State official had no comments.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendments change a requirement with respect to installation or use of a facility component located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20 and changes Surveillance Requirements. The NRC staff has determined that the amendments involve no significant increase in the amounts, and no significant change in the types, of any effluents that may be released offsite, and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has previously issued a proposed finding that the amendments involve no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (57 FR 2600 cite). Accordingly, the amendments meet the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendments.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, (2) such

activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendments will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

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AMENDMENT NO. 93 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-2 - FARLEY, UNIT 1
AMENDMENT NO. 86 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-8 - FARLEY, UNIT 2

Docket File
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Local PDR
PDII-1 Reading
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cc: Farley Service List