



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

May 13, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Chairman  
Commissioner Rogers  
Commissioner Remick  
Commissioner de Planque

FROM: James M. Taylor  
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT UNIT 2 RESTART

This memorandum is to inform the Commission of the restart of South Texas Project (STP) Unit 2 and the related staff actions.

Background

Both units at STP were shut down in early February 1993 and remained shut down as a result of a number of hardware, programmatic, and management problems identified by the NRC and the licensee. Unit 1 was restarted on February 18, 1994. In addition to correcting many of the same issues as those for Unit 1, the licensee completed a refueling of Unit 2. The licensee plans to be ready to restart Unit 2 the week of May 16, 1994.

In response to the problems with the turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pumps that initially caused the units to be shut down, the NRC staff issued Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL) 4-93-04 to Houston Lighting and Power Company on February 5, 1993. The CAL was supplemented on May 5 and October 15, 1993, to delineate items identified by a diagnostic evaluation team and related inspection followup activity. In the CAL and its supplements, the staff discussed the hardware, programmatic, and management issues which required resolution prior to the restart of either unit. On February 15, 1994, the NRC lifted the restrictions of the CAL for Unit 1 and stated that the provisions of the CAL and its supplements remained in place for Unit 2.

Discussion

On April 12, 1993, the NRC staff determined that NRC Inspection Manual Chapter 0350, "Staff Guidelines for Restart Approval," was applicable to STP because of the extended shutdown and previous indications of serious deficiencies in licensee management effectiveness. A South Texas Restart Panel was formed to track all actions relating to restart. The panel developed a detailed Restart Action Plan for Unit 1 which specified actions that the NRC was to take before restart of the South Texas units, including those actions not directly related to the initiating event. The final revision of the Unit 1 Restart Action Plan was issued on March 2, 1994, following NRC approval of Unit 1 restart. The Unit 2 Restart Action Plan

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includes only those issues specific to Unit 2 which the Panel must consider before recommending approval of Unit 2 restart. Thirteen issues remain to be closed. Included in the open restart issues is a review of the licensee's employee concerns program. This review is being conducted by personnel from the Region IV Walnut Creek Field Office to provide a more independent perspective. The Division of Reactor Safety in Region IV is evaluating Unit 2 standby diesel generator reliability. Due to recent problems with the standby diesel generators that have not been fully resolved, this issue has the potential to impact restart. A Unit 2 restart readiness inspection began on May 9 to evaluate four of the restart issues. The remaining items are being reviewed by the resident inspectors and include observations of testing and plant activities in Mode 3. All inspections are expected to be completed by May 16, 1994.

The licensee will brief the NRC staff on the readiness of the plant to restart in a public meeting currently scheduled for May 17, 1994. If all restart issues have been satisfactorily resolved, it is expected that the NRC will issue a letter lifting the provisions of the CAL for Unit 2 at that time.

Beginning approximately one day prior to Mode 2 entry, the NRC will provide 24-hour coverage of plant activities. This augmented coverage will continue until Unit 2 has demonstrated proficiency power range operation (about 16 days).

The staff will inform the Commission of any significant change to the anticipated restart date.

James M. Taylor <sup>Original signed by</sup>  
 Executive Director <sub>James M. Taylor</sub>  
 for Operations

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