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UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

February 17, 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 1 RESTART

This memorandum is to inform the Commission of the restart of South Texas Project Unit 1 (STP) and the related staff actions.

Background

Both units at STP were shut down in early February 1993. They have remained shut down as a result of numerous broad problems identified by the NRC and the licensee. The licensee plans to restart Unit 1 on or about February 17, 1994.

On February 3, 1993, following a reactor trip, the Unit 2 turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater (AFW) pump started and immediately tripped on overspeed. On February 4, 1993, the licensee shut down Unit 1 as a result of repeated failures of the turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump to start on demand and operate without tripping on overspeed. In response to these turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump problems, NRC issued a Confirmatory Action Letter (CAL) to the Houston Lighting and Power Company (HL&P) on February 5, 1993, and dispatched an augmented inspection team (AIT) to investigate the details surrounding the turbine-driven auxiliary feedwater pump problems. The CAL detailed a number of issues which required resolution prior to either unit being restarted.

Additionally, the NRC Office for Analysis and Evaluation of Operational Data conducted a diagnostic evaluation of South Texas between March 29 and April 30, 1993. The findings of this effort were forwarded to the licensee on June 10, 1993. Numerous items were documented in this report, including a number of issues that NRC considered of sufficient scope and safety significance to require resolution prior to either unit being restarted. The CAL was supplemented on May 5, 1993, and October 15, 1993, to delineate those items identified by the Diagnostic Evaluation Team (DET) and related inspection activity.

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Discussion

The process of restarting STP involved a number of licensee initiatives and comprehensive evaluation by the NRC. On March 11, 1993, the NRC Region IV regional administrator chartered the STP Review Panel to coordinate NRC's review activities. On April 12, 1993, it was determined that NRC Inspection Manual Chapter 0350, "Staff Guidelines for Restart Approval," was applicable for STP because of the extended shutdown and previous indications of serious deficiencies in licensee management effectiveness. The review panel assumed the role of the South Texas Restart Panel which was responsible for developing a Restart Action Plan.

The Restart Action Plan included expected NRC actions that were required to be taken before restart of the first South Texas unit, including those actions not directly related to the initial shutdown. Prior to restarting the first unit, the licensee resolved each restart issue to its satisfaction and to the NRC's satisfaction. The provisions of the CAL and its supplements remain in place for Unit 2. The NRC will review the Operational Readiness Plan for Unit 2 when it is available and monitor the licensee's readiness for restarting Unit 2.

The licensee initially addressed its corrective actions in response to the DET report in a letter dated August 8, 1993. The licensee subsequently forwarded an Operational Readiness Plan (ORP) which addressed the initiatives that it considered necessary to be completed prior to the resumption of power operation on either unit on August 28, 1993. In addition, the licensee submitted the "South Texas Business Plan" on October 15, 1993. This plan, in conjunction with the ORP, constituted HL&P's response to the NRC's DET report, and outlined those actions and resource allocations necessary to effect near-term and long-term improvements in station performance.

The Special Inspection Branch of NRR provided an independent assessment of the licensee's readiness to restart Unit 1 by conducting an Operational Readiness Assessment Team (ORAT) inspection during the period December 6-10, 1993, and January 12-21, 1994. The team raised three issues that the licensee had agreed to act on prior to restart. As described in a letter to the licensee dated January 27, 1994, the issues concerned weaknesses in configuration management programs, control of the manual operation of motor-operated valves, and operability of the power operated relief valves. The staff affirmed that the licensee's commitments in these areas had been completed.

By letter dated January 29, 1994, the licensee requested a briefing to address the conditions of the CAL. This briefing was conducted in a public meeting on February 14, 1994. Two items were not complete at the meeting: completion of feedwater isolation valve (FWIV) bypass valve testing and configuration

management training for Unit 1 personnel. Subsequent to the public meeting, the FWIV bypass valve testing was completed satisfactorily on February 14, 1994; and verification of the training was completed on February 15, 1994. A letter lifting the CAL was issued on February 15, 1994.

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 James M. Taylor
 James M. Taylor
 Executive Director for Operations

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June 18, 1993

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

FROM: James M. Taylor
Executive Director for Operations

SUBJECT: SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT ELECTRIC GENERATING STATION DIAGNOSTIC
EVALUATION TEAM REPORT

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the AEOD diagnostic evaluation team report for the South Texas Project Electric Generating Station. This evaluation was initiated following discussions during the NRC senior managers meeting in January 1993. The need for a diagnostic evaluation was based on a perceived decline in the licensee's performance at South Texas Project. The report documents the team's findings and conclusions, and includes discussions of the licensee's strengths and weaknesses. Follow-up staff actions resulting from the diagnostic evaluation are currently under development.

I would be pleased to provide any clarification or further information that you may require.

Original signed by
James M. Taylor

James M. Taylor
Executive Director for Operations

Enclosure:
Diagnostic Evaluation Team Report
for the South Texas Project Electric
Generating Station

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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 ^{Original signed by}
 Executive Director ^{James M. Taylor}
 for Operations

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