

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

In the Matter of )  
ALABAMA POWER COMPANY ) Docket No. 50-364  
Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, )  
Unit 2 )

EXEMPTION

I.

Alabama Power Company (the licensee) is the holder of Facility Operating License No. NPF-8, which authorizes operation of the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Unit 2 (Farley 2 or Unit 2), a pressurized water reactor located in Houston County near Dothan, Alabama. The license provides, among other things, that the facility is subject to all rules, regulations and Orders of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) now or hereafter in effect.

ii.

Section 50.55a(g)(4)(ii) to 10 CFR Part 50 requires that inservice examinations of components, inservice tests to verify operational readiness of pumps and valves whose function is required for safety, and system pressure tests, shall comply with requirements of the latest Edition and Addenda of the ASME Code for each successive 120-month inspection interval. These intervals start from the date of commercial operation of the facility. Thus, the second ten-year interval for Farley 2 would begin on July 31, 1991.

By letter dated June 22, 1988, the licensee requested an exemption from 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(4)(ii) from the next schedule for updating (July 31, 1991) the Inservice Inspection (ISI) Program and Inservice Testing (IST) Program for Farley 2.

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The licensee proposes to make the Unit 2 ISI and IST programs essentially identical to the existing Unit 1 program. The licensee proposes to implement the ASME Code 1983 Edition and Summer 1983 Addenda during the Farley 2 sixth refueling outage (March 1989) for the remainder of the Farley 2 first ten-year interval. The 1983 Edition and Summer 1983 Addenda would remain effective for the Farley 2 second ten-year interval which commences on July 31, 1991. In support of its request, the licensee provided supporting reasons for issuance of an exemption from the program update requirements of 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(4)(ii) pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12 for Farley 2.

iii.

The Commission staff has reviewed the request and has determined that this action would provide a common ASME Code of record start date for Farley 1 and Farley 2. Inherent administrative, technical, and cost-saving advantages for the licensee and for the Commission staff are apparent. Without granting of the exemption, the licensee would prepare and implement ISI and IST programs for Unit 2, which are different from those being reviewed for Unit 1, using ASME Code Editions and Addenda existing one year prior to the July 31, 1991 start date of the next 120-month interval. The Commission staff would then be required to review the separate programs and associated relief requests for Farley 2.

The Farley 1 ISI and IST updated programs implemented on December 1, 1987, remain under review by the staff. The Farley 2 programs would be made similar to these Farley 1 programs. The staff has determined that:

1. The Farley units are nearly identical designs and only one ISI and IST program will be adequate to meet the basic intent of 10 CFR 50.55a(g). Application of a strict reading of the rule is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule and, therefore, the special circumstances required by 10 CFR 50.12(2)(ii) are met.

2. There should be minimal or no increase in risk of failure of safety related pumps, valves or other components resulting from the use of common ISI and IST programs for the remainder of the operating life of the two units.

3. The use of only one program instead of two separate programs by operators and maintenance personnel will increase plant safety through the simplification and standardization of plant testing procedures and testing requirements. The use of uniform procedures for both units may reduce the chance of personnel errors during tests and surveillances.

4. The change will result in a savings of manpower requirements for the licensee, as well as for the Commission staff.

The purpose of the rule, as it currently exists, is to assure periodic updating of ISI and IST practices to conform to industry changes on a 120-month schedule in order that any improvements in code provisions may be periodically incorporated in plant inspection and testing programs. Section XI Code changes generally deal with practical considerations of implementation or the application of new developments. The safety aspects of the code remain relatively unchanged from edition to edition. The Unit 2 programs will be updated three years ahead of the next required update. The Unit 1 programs now under staff review were updated in 1987 to the 1983 Edition through the Summer 1983 Addenda of the ASME Code. Thus, the Unit 1 and Unit 2 programs would both

utilize the 1983 Edition through the Summer 1983 Addenda until December 1, 1997. Updating the Farley 2 program three years in advance of the required update is consistent with the purpose of the regulation and will provide a level of safety comparable to the later code and will incorporate code improvements earlier than required.

The licensee states that an attempt has been made to complete the maximum number of ISI inspections permitted by the Code for Farley 2 during the first two inspection periods. Since the third forty-month ISI period for Farley 2 began on March 30, 1988, the only remaining refueling outages (March 1989 and September 1990) do not allow sufficient time to complete all remaining inspections to the 1974 Edition. Therefore, the licensee proposes to use the 1983 Edition through the Summer 1983 Addenda of the ASME Code for the third forty-month period of the first ten-year interval on Farley 2. Because the later Code Edition and Addenda will provide adequate assurance of the integrity of safety related pumps, valves or other components, the Commission staff finds this acceptable.

In order to provide the licensee with administrative flexibility and yet meet the intent of the regulation to update ISI and IST programs at 120-month intervals, the staff has determined that an exemption to 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(4)(ii), as requested by the licensee pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12, should be granted.

#### IV.

Accordingly, the Commission has determined that, pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a), the exemption requested by the licensee's letter of June 22, 1988 is authorized by law and will not endanger life or property or the common defense

and security, and is otherwise in the public interest and that special circumstances are present as set forth in 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii). The Commission hereby grants the licensee an exemption from the requirements of 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(4)(ii), as it relates to the 120-month inspection interval for inservice examination of components, inservice tests to verify operational readiness of pumps and valves, and system pressure tests for Farley 2.

Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.32, the Commission has determined that granting this exemption will have no significant impact on the environment (53 FR 32950).

This exemption is effective upon issuance.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland this 31st day of August, 1988.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Steven A. Varga, Director  
Division of Reactor Projects I/II  
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

\*SEE PREVIOUS CONCURRENCE

OFC	:LA:PD21:DRPR:PM	:DRHR	:EMTB:DEST	:EMEB:DEST	:OGC	:D:PD21:DRPR	:ADRII:DRPR
NAME	:PAnderson*	:EReaves:ch*	:CYCheng*	:LMarsh*	:MYoung*	:EAdensam*	:GLainas*
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