



GULF STATES UTILITIES COMPANY

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July 20, 1987

RBG-26,281

File No. G9.5

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Gentlemen:

River Bend Station - Unit 1
Docket No. 50-458

With regard to your letter dated June 29, 1987, Gulf States Utilities Company (GSU) remains fully committed to the safe operation of River Bend Station (RBS) in accordance with the operating license, NRC and other Federal, State and local regulations and INPO guidelines as emphasized in GSU's letters of July 29 and December 15, 1986. GSU continues to fulfill all its financial obligations related to RBS and will not compromise plant safety to control expenditures. The specific matters identified in your June 29, 1987 letter are addressed in the attachment to this letter including actions to contend with and reverse the trend in turnover of engineering staff.

GSU has provided information concerning its financial status and the status of rate case filings in two previous submittals and has continued to advise the NRC of new developments. To update GSU's previous submittals, the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) granted GSU \$39.9 million in interim increases, with conditions which have been satisfied including the establishment of a \$65 million line of credit, which is now available to the company. Also, the Louisiana Public Service Commission (LPSC) granted GSU \$57 million in emergency rate relief. These interim rates will remain in effect until permanent rate decisions are reached. GSU is hopeful of favorable decisions by the PUCT and LPSC later this year in these permanent rate cases.

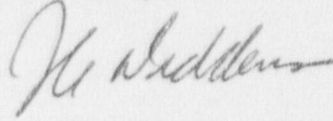
In conclusion, GSU wishes to confirm that it will continue to support its commitment to the quality and safe operation of RBS and will strive to maintain its performance at an overall high level as

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discussed in the June 9, 1987, Systematic Assessment of Licensee Performance (SALP) Board Report. Also, as previously committed, the NRC will be kept informed of developments in this matter.

Sincerely,



J.C. Deddens
Senior Vice President
River Bend Nuclear Group

JCD/JEB/ERG/RJK/ch

Attachment

cc: Mr. Dennis M. Crutchfield, Director
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III, IV, V and Special Projects
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ATTACHMENT

Response to NRC Letter Dated June 29, 1987

Staffing

The current RBS actual staffing is at approximately 90% of the complement authorized by GSU. GSU's overall staffing levels have remained essentially constant for RBS during 1986 and 1987. GSU has experienced some turnover but has maintained sufficient staffing through recruiting of new personnel. Specifically in Engineering, GSU has replaced engineers who have left GSU with experienced engineers from outside and inside GSU (many of these have experience at RBS) and have added contract engineers on a short term basis until GSU's recruiting program is concluded. These efforts have allowed work to continue without interruption. Further, turnover in Engineering has diminished to a negligible level in recent months and intensive recruiting continues to fill the remaining RBS positions. Currently, the Engineering Department has 88 approved positions of which 75 are staffed and offers are outstanding on a number of the other positions. Specific steps have been approved to provide additional incentive for the Engineering Staff to remain with GSU.

Training

GSU is actively training in all areas addressed in the FSAR. Adequate resources are available to continue to provide well-qualified instructors for all areas of committed training and for the maintenance of the training facilities, including the full scope plant reference simulator located at the Training Center. GSU remains committed to obtaining INPO accreditation of its training program as evidenced by the successful accreditation of four additional training programs bringing the total of INPO accredited programs at RBS to seven. The three final training programs have been submitted for accreditation and are on schedule for final approval. Additionally, the June 9, 1987, SALP Report rated GSU Category 1 in Training and Qualification Effectiveness. In summary, there has not been a reduction in training programs at RBS.

Maintenance

The backlog of open Priority 1 Corrective Maintenance Work Orders has been reduced. When recent trend of Corrective Maintenance Work Orders began to show a slight increase in the total open backlog, the additional craft personnel needed for the upcoming refueling outage were brought in early. These additional personnel are expected to further reduce the Corrective Maintenance Work Order backlog.

Scheduled maintenance tasks such as Preventive Maintenance, Equipment Qualification tasks and Surveillance Tests are periodically reviewed to ensure that proper frequencies and priorities are established. When practical, scheduled maintenance tasks having similar activities and frequencies are consolidated to enhance the efficiency of the Maintenance Program.

No maintenance tasks have been deferred which would impact the safe operation of the plant. Maintenance has been and will continue to be scheduled and performed as required to maintain the plant in a safe and reliable operating condition.

Design Change Modifications

River Bend Station's next planned outage is the first refueling outage during the fall of 1987 during which approximately 90 design modifications are scheduled to be implemented. No design changes which would effect the safe operation of RBS are being deferred.

It is GSU's intent to continue to meet all regulatory requirements. During the refueling outage in the fall of 1987, GSU is scheduling corrective maintenance, surveillance testing, in-service examination testing and performance of those corrective activities identified in the interim. In addition, items are being scheduled as required by license conditions. GSU management continues to review discretionary spending while maintaining a dedicated vigilance for the design and safety of RBS operations and support.

Parts Procurement

River Bend Station has not deferred the procurement of any operational plant parts. Identification and purchase of 1987 refueling outage parts and materials have not been curtailed. Replenishment of inventory stock continues to maintain sufficient levels to support plant operations. GSU's current plans are to take over, in October 1987, the activities of the Nuclear Parts Association (a contract group which has been handling the RBS procurement activities) and is adding approximately 24 personnel to accomplish this activity.

Management and Quality Assurance

The June 9, 1987, SALP Report rated GSU Category 1 in Quality Programs and Administrative Controls Affecting Quality, and there has been no reduction in Quality Assurance (QA) or management oversight programs at RBS. The total authorized GSU QA personnel complement has not decreased for the past two (2) years. GSU is actively recruiting to fill open positions and should be at its total authorized complement by the third quarter of 1987. Presently, only 3 positions remain open. In the interim, positions are being filled by contractor employees. Further, GSU has recently staffed a position in the area of oversight for maintenance, radiation protection, chemistry, and warehousing.