



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

January 30, 2024

LICENSEE: Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.

FACILITY: Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF JANUARY 8, 2024, OBSERVATION PUBLIC MEETING HELD WITH SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY, INC., TO DISCUSS THE LICENSEE'S RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR EDWIN I. HATCH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2, REGARDING LICENSE AMENDMENT REQUEST TO RELAX THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF FULLY TENSIONED REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL HEAD CLOSURE BOLTS (EPID NO. L-2022-LLA-0120)

On January 8, 2023, an Observation meeting was held between the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and representatives of Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (SNC, the licensee). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the license amendment request (LAR), dated August 19, 2022 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML22231B055), as supplemented by letters dated January 20, 2023 (ML23020A902) and October 20, 2023 (ML23293A235), to relax the required number of fully tensioned reactor pressure vessel (RPV) head closure bolts in Technical Specifications (TS) Table 1.1-1, "MODES", for Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant (Hatch or HNP), Units 1 and 2.

Specifically, this meeting aimed to further discuss and understand SNC's supplement, dated October 20, 2023, that provided responses to the NRC's Request for Additional Information (RAI) dated September 11, 2023 (ML23250A047).

A list of attendees is provided in Enclosure 1.

The meeting agenda was the following:

TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER
1:00 pm	Introductions	NRC/SNC
1:05 pm	Discussion about SNC's responses to requests for additional information and possible additional information needs/clarification	NRC/SNC
2:25 pm	Public Comments/Questions	NRC/SNC
2:30 pm	Meeting Adjourned	

On December 15, 2023 (ML23355A128), the meeting was noticed on the NRC public webpage. SNC provided presentation slides (ML23361A109) for their discussion. During the discussion on January 8, 2024, SNC clarified that on slide 9 the change was intended to read, "at least 51 reactor vessel head closure bolts" instead of "at least 51 of 52 reactor vessel head closure bolts".

The NRC staff opened the meeting with introductory remarks and a roll call of the attendees. The NRC brought up the following discussion topics:

1. In its response to RAI-01, SNC stated, in part, that “HNP Unit 1 and Unit 2 TS Sections 3.1 through 3.10 identify the SSCs [structures, systems, and components] that are required to be operable. The RPV [head closure bolts] are not an SSC described in Section 3.1 through 3.10. As such, the TS definition of OPERABLE/OPERABILITY is not applicable to the RPV [head closure bolts]. SNC considers “out of service” to mean a bolt that is not installed or a bolt that is or has become less than fully tensioned.”

The NRC staff disagreed with the licensee’s assertion that the term OPERABLE-OPERABILITY, as provided in the TS Definitions (Section 1.1), does not apply to the RPV head closure bolt(s). NRC staff explained that TS 3.4.1, “*Recirculation Loops Operating*,” provides the limiting condition for operation (LCO) for the reactor coolant system (RCS) recirculation loops and that the RPV is a vital component of the RCS that is within the scope of LCO 3.4.1. The RPV head closure bolts are a necessary component of the RCS that ensures protection against reactor coolant leakage and maintains core RCS integrity. The NRC staff expressed the view that the RPV head closure bolt operability provides reasonable assurance that they will not fail during operation and challenge RCS integrity.

2. In SNC’s presentation, slides 9 and 10 introduce their newly proposed TS and License Condition (LC) changes for Table 1.1-1, “MODES” for HNP Units 1 and 2, respectively. For HNP Unit 1, the change would allow operation in MODES 1-4 with “[a]t least 51 reactor vessel head closure bolts fully tensioned”, and operation in MODE 5 with “[f]ewer than 51 reactor vessel head closure bolts fully tensioned”. The proposed new LC for HNP Unit 1 would state:

(12) Reactor Vessel Head Closure Bolts

Hatch Nuclear Plant Unit 1 is approved to operate in MODES 1-4 with at least 51 of 52 reactor vessel head closure bolts fully tensioned. In addition, a reactor vessel head closure bolt cannot be considered ‘fully tensioned’ unless all applicable [American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)] Section XI acceptance criteria are met (irrespective of any existing NRC approved alternative to, or relief from, the acceptance criteria). Upon implementation of Amendment No., Southern Nuclear Operating Company shall update the Reactor Vessel Reassembly procedure to include this requirement.

For HNP Unit 2, the change would allow operation in MODES 1-4 with “[a]t least 54 reactor vessel head closure bolts fully tensioned”, and operation in MODE 5 with “[f]ewer than 54 reactor vessel head closure bolts fully tensioned”. The new LC for HNP Unit 2 would state:

(i) Reactor Vessel Head Closure Bolts

Hatch Nuclear Plant Unit 2 is approved to operate in MODES 1-4 with at least 54 reactor vessel head closure bolts fully tensioned. In addition, a reactor vessel head closure bolt cannot be considered ‘fully tensioned’ unless all applicable ASME Section XI acceptance criteria are met (irrespective of any existing NRC approved alternative to, or relief from, the acceptance criteria). Any bolt that is less than fully tensioned shall have at least nine adjacent bolts on either side that are fully tensioned. Upon implementation of Amendment No., Southern Nuclear Operating Company shall update the Reactor Vessel Reassembly procedure to include this requirement.

Slide 11 states, in part, that “The proposed license conditions are worded such that no RPV head closure bolt could be credited as in service if it does not meet ASME Section XI requirements.”

The NRC staff agreed that the proposed new language for TS Table 1.1-1 and new LCs address the NRC’s concerns and that HNP Unit 2 RPV head closure bolt #33 would not be considered fully tensioned unless it meets the criteria in the proposed LC. The NRC staff suggested that SNC consider further revision to clarify (e.g., a footnote) to serve as a pointer to the LC since the LC provides clarifying information on what “fully tensioned” means. SNC stated that they currently have internal administrative controls to keep track of TS requirements but would consider the NRC’s suggestion.

SNC volunteered to submit information on the docket including the newly proposed TS Table 1.1-1, “MODES” and LC changes that were presented in the meeting as well as clarifying the SNC position on RPV head closure bolts as support components. The NRC also suggested SNC docket its intent that the LC defines what is needed to be considered operable.

The NRC staff made no regulatory decisions during the meeting. Once a regulatory decision is made, the NRC staff will provide SNC the regulatory decision in writing in a timely manner. Public Meeting Feedback forms were available, but no comments were received.

The meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm Eastern Time (ET).

Please direct any inquiries to me at Zachary.Turner@nrc.gov or 301-415-2258.

/RA/

Zachary M. Turner, Project Manager
Plant Licensing Branch, II-1
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-321 and 50-366

Enclosure: List of Attendees

cc w/encls: Distribution via Listserv

LIST OF ATTENDEES

**JANUARY 8, 2024, OBSERVATION PUBLIC MEETING HELD WITH SOUTHERN NUCLEAR
OPERATING COMPANY, INC., TO DISCUSS A REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION FOR EDWIN I. HATCH NUCLEAR PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 LICENSE
AMENDMENT REQUEST TO RELAX THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF FULLY TENSIONED
REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL HEAD CLOSURE BOLTS (EPID NO. L-2022-LLA-0120)**

<u>ATTENDEE</u>	<u>REPRESENTING</u>
Stewart Bailey	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
Eric Benner	NRC
Angie Buford	NRC
Vis Cusumano	NRC
Dave Dijamco	NRC
Robert Elliott	NRC
Kim Green	NRC
Ravi Grover	NRC
Jamie Heisserer	NRC
Andrea Johnson	NRC
Mike King	NRC
John G. Lamb	NRC
Kamal Manoly	NRC
Mike Markley	NRC
Shivani Mehta	NRC
Carol Moyer	NRC
Bo Pham	NRC
MJ Ross-Lee	NRC
David Rutland	NRC
Zach Turner	NRC
Leslie Allen	Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC)
Amy Aughtman	SNC
Ryan Joyce	SNC
Adam Quarles	SNC
Asif Patel	SNC
Denise Brooks	General Electric (GE) Vernova
Timothy Enfinger	GE Vernova

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KManoly, NRR
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SBailey, NRR
RElliott, NRR

**ADAMS Accession No. PKG ML23361A124
Meeting Slides ML23361A109**

**Meeting Notice ML23355A128
Meeting Summary ML24012A159**

OFFICE	DORL/LPL2-1/PM	DORL/LPL2-1/PM	DORL/LPL2-1/PM	DORL/LPL2-1/LA
NAME	ZTurner	AJohnson	JLamb	KGoldstein
DATE	1/12/2024	1/17/2024	1/17/2024	01/16/2024
OFFICE	DSS/STSB/BC	DEX/EMIB/BC	DORL/LP2-1/BC	DORL/LPL2-1/PM
NAME	SMehta	SBailey	MMarkley	ZTurner
DATE	1/19/2024	1/29/2024	1/30/2024	1/30/2024

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