

From: John Lamb
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2025 1:29 PM
To: Lowery, Ken G.
Cc: Joyce, Ryan M.
Subject: Acceptance Review - Vogtle 3 and 4 - License Amendment Request to Increase Flexibility in Mode Restraints

Ken,

By letter dated December 19, 2024 (Agencywide Document and Access Management System Accession No. ML24354A169), Southern Nuclear Operating Company submitted a license amendment request (LAR) for Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (Vogtle), Units 3 and 4. The LAR proposes to change Vogtle, Units 3 and 4, Technical Specifications (TSs), to increase flexibility in mode restraints. The proposed LAR is similar to the Technical Specification Task Force (TSTF) 359, Revision 9, "Increased Flexibility in Mode Restraints," with proposed changes similar to those identified in TSTF-529, Revision 4, "Clarify Use and Application Rules," for Limiting Condition for Operation (LCO) 3.0.4.

The purpose of this e-mail is to provide the results of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff's acceptance review of this proposed LAR. The acceptance review was performed to determine if there is sufficient technical information in scope and depth to allow the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical review. The acceptance review is also intended to identify whether the application has any readily apparent information insufficiencies in its characterization of the regulatory requirements or the licensing basis of the plant.

Consistent with Section 50.90 of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), an application for an amendment to a license (including the technical specifications) [or construction permit] must fully describe the changes requested, and following as far as applicable, the form prescribed for original applications. Section 50.34 of 10 CFR addresses the content of technical information required. This section stipulates that the submittal address the design and operating characteristics, unusual or novel design features, and principal safety considerations.

The NRC staff has reviewed your proposed LAR and concluded that it does provide technical information in sufficient detail to enable the NRC staff to complete its detailed technical review and make an independent assessment regarding the acceptability of the proposed LAR in terms of regulatory requirements and the protection of public health and safety and the environment. Given the lesser scope and depth of the acceptance review as compared to the detailed technical review, there may be instances in which issues that impact the NRC staff's ability to complete the detailed technical review are identified despite completion of an adequate acceptance review. If additional information is needed, you will be advised by separate correspondence.

Based on the information provided in your submittal and discussions during the pre-licensing meeting on October 16, 2024 (ML24292A002), the NRC staff has estimated that this licensing request will take approximately 350 hours to complete. The NRC staff expects to complete this review on January 13, 2026. If there are emergent complexities or challenges in our review that would cause changes to the initial forecasted completion date or significant changes in the forecasted hours, the reasons for the changes, along with the new estimates, will be communicated during the routine interactions with the assigned project manager.

These estimates are based on the NRC staff's initial review of the LAR, and they could change, due to several factors including requests for additional information, unanticipated addition of scope to the review, and review by NRC advisory committees or hearing-related activities. Additional delay may occur if the submittal is provided to the NRC in advance or in parallel with industry program initiatives or pilot applications.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

John G. Lamb, Senior Project Manager
Licensing Project Branch LPL 2-1
Division of Operating Reactor Licensing
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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