



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

November 1, 1999

Mr. Harold W. Keiser
Chief Nuclear Officer & President -
Nuclear Business Unit
Public Service Electric & Gas
Company
Post Office Box 236
Hancocks Bridge, NJ 08038

SUBJECT: SAFETY EVALUATION FOR HOPE CREEK GENERATING STATION, REQUEST
FOR AUTHORIZATION OF ALTERNATE EXAMINATION OF REACTOR
PRESSURE VESSEL CIRCUMFERENTIAL WELDS (TAC NO. MA6037)

Dear Mr. Keiser:

By letter dated July 9, 1999, Public Service Electric and Gas Company requested that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) approve an alternative to the inservice inspection (ISI) requirements for performing volumetric examination of reactor pressure vessel (RPV) circumferential welds at the Hope Creek Generating Station (HCGS). These examinations are required by Section XI of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code and by the augmented examination requirements of Section 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)(A)(2) of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR).

The alternative was proposed pursuant to the provisions of 10 CFR 50.55a(g)(6)(ii)(A)(5), and was based on the guidance provided in Generic Letter 98-05, "Boiling Water Reactor Licensees Use of BWRVIP-05 Report to Request Relief From Augmented Examination Requirements on Reactor Pressure Vessel Circumferential Shell Welds." The alternative was proposed as a permanent relief (i.e., for the remaining term of operation under the existing license for HCGS) from the ISI requirements of 10 CFR 50.55a(g) for the volumetric examination of the HCGS RPV circumferential welds.

The NRC staff has evaluated the information provided in your submittal, and has concluded that the proposed alternative provides an acceptable level of quality and safety relative to ensuring the structural integrity of the circumferential welds. Therefore, the proposed alternative is authorized pursuant to 10 CFR 50.55a(a)(3)(i). The augmented examinations of the HCGS RPV circumferential welds may be permanently deferred for the remaining term of operation

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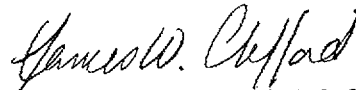
H. Keiser

- 2 -

under the existing, initial operating license (i.e, through April 11, 2026). The staff's safety evaluation is enclosed.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the Hope Creek Project Manager, Richard B. Ennis, at (301) 415-1420.

Sincerely,



James W. Clifford, Chief, Section 2
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-354

Enclosure: Safety Evaluation

cc w/encl: See next page

Hope Creek Generating Station

cc:

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