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Mr. William T. Cottle
President and Chief Executive Officer
STP Nuclear Operating Company
South Texas Project Electric
Generating Station
P. O. Box 289
Wadsworth, TX 77483

October 29, 1999

SUBJECT: SOUTH TEXAS PROJECT, UNITS 1 AND 2 - REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON REQUEST FOR AN EXEMPTION FROM SEISMIC INSTRUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS (TAC NOS. MA6128 AND MA6129)

Dear Mr. Cottle:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff is reviewing STP Nuclear Operating Company's July 13, 1999, request for an exemption from seismic instrumentation requirements. On the basis of its review, the staff has determined that additional information is needed as discussed in the enclosed request for additional information.

This request was discussed with Mr. Ken Taplett of your staff on October 18, 1999, and a mutually agreeable response of within 60 days from the date of this letter was established. If circumstances result in the need to revise the target date, please call me at the earliest opportunity. The staff appreciates the efforts expended with respect to this matter.

Sincerely,
ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:
Thomas W. Alexion, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-498 and 50-499

Enclosure: As stated

cc w/encl: See next page

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South Texas, Units 1 & 2

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Request for Additional Information

Proposed Exemption from the Seismic Instrumentation Requirements

South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2

The staff has the following questions concerning the licensee's proposed earthquake response plan (Appendix C to Attachment 1) and the statement on page 2 of Attachment 1 that South Texas Project will follow the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) "Guidelines for Nuclear Plant Response to an Earthquake," EPRI NP-6695.

1. Do the "acceleration data" referred to on page 1 of Appendix C to Attachment 1 represent the response spectrum and cumulative absolute velocity (CAV) checks required by the operating basis earthquake (OBE) exceedance criterion given in Appendix A of EPRI NP-6695? If not, then explain the term "acceleration data."
2. Are you planning on following the revised OBE exceedance criterion given in EPRI TR-100082, "Standardization of the Cumulative Absolute Velocity?" If not, then what OBE exceedance criterion are you following?
3. Describe the stand-alone seismic instrument, the hardware that you will use to retrieve the ground motion data from the seismic instrument, and the software that you will use to process the ground motion data in order to obtain response spectra and CAV.
4. Describe your procedures for calibrating the seismic instrument and retrieving and processing the ground motion data.
5. Will you be able to process the ground motion record from the stand-alone seismic instrument, which will be maintained at the site, in order to determine the ground motion parameters required by the OBE exceedance criterion (response spectrum and CAV) within a time period of 4 hours as stated on page 4-5 of EPRI NP-6695?
6. Are you planning to locate the stand-alone instrument in either a free-field location adjacent to the plant or at a location in the plant for which there is a design-basis in-structure response spectrum as recommended by EPRI NP-5930, "A Criterion for Determining Exceedance of the Operating Basis Earthquake?" If not, then provide the rationale for the location of the seismic instrument.
7. Page 1 of Appendix C to Attachment 1 states, "Information regarding the earthquake magnitude and epicenter will be readily available from the National Earthquake Resource Center." Identify the "National Earthquake Resource Center" in the event that this organization differs from the National Earthquake Information Center. Also provide the details of the procedure that will be used to "readily" obtain the earthquake epicenter and magnitude information.

ENCLOSURE