



50-424/425

UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

December 14, 1999

Mr. J. B. Beasley, Jr.
Vice President
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
Post Office Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

SUBJECT: VOGTLE ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT, UNITS 1 AND 2 RE: RESPONSE TO GENERIC LETTER 96-06, "ASSURANCE OF EQUIPMENT OPERABILITY AND CONTAINMENT INTEGRITY DURING DESIGN BASIS ACCIDENT CONDITIONS" (TAC NOS. M96881 AND M96882)

Dear Mr. Beasley

By letters dated January 27, 1997, and August 30, 1999, Southern Nuclear Operating Company, formerly Georgia Power Company (licensee), submitted its response to Generic Letter GL 96-06, "Assurance of Equipment Operability and Containment Integrity During Design Basis Accident Conditions." The following evaluation addresses the issue of thermally-induced pressurization of piping runs penetrating the containment. The water hammer and two phase flow issues will be addressed in separate correspondence.

In its submittal of January 27, 1997, the licensee identified 15 penetrations as vulnerable to a water solid volume that may be subjected to an increase in pressure due to heating of trapped fluid. The licensee implemented controls to assure that two of the lines are only isolated while the fluid is hot during normal operation. For the remaining 13 lines, the licensee determined that the affected penetrations are operable based on piping plastic deformation and potential leakage through packing/valve seating surfaces. For its long-term corrective actions, the licensee committed to install any required modifications to the system or implement changes to system operations during the refueling outages of Units 1 and 2 in fall 1997, and spring 1998, respectively.

In response to the staff's request for additional information of July 27, 1999, the licensee, in its submittal of August 30, 1999, provided applicable design criteria for the piping and valves on four of the penetrations including the pressure at which each valve was determined to lift off its seat or leak, and the maximum calculated stress in the affected piping. For the remaining nine penetrations, the licensee stated that it had installed pressure relief valves on four penetrations, and revised operating procedures for five penetrations to drain any fluid from the piping prior to returning the unit to operation, thus, ensuring that thermally-induced overpressurization will not occur under accident conditions. The staff finds your evaluation reasonable and acceptable.

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The staff concludes that the licensee's evaluation and corrective action provide an acceptable resolution for the issue of thermally-induced pressurization of piping runs penetrating the containment.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

Ramin Assa, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-424 and 50-425

cc: See next page

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The staff concludes that the licensee's evaluation and corrective action provide an acceptable resolution for the issue of thermally-induced pressurization of piping runs penetrating the containment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ramin Assa". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

Ramin Assa, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-424 and 50-425

cc: See next page

Vogtle Electric Generating Plant

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