

October 30, 2002

Mr. J. A. Price
Site Vice President - Millstone
c/o Mr. David A. Smith
Dominion Nuclear Connecticut, Inc.
Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385

SUBJECT: MILLSTONE POWER STATION, UNIT NO. 3 (MP3) - RESPONSE TO NRC BULLETIN 2002-02, "REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL HEAD AND VESSEL HEAD PENETRATION NOZZLE INSPECTION PROGRAMS" (TAC NO. MB5902)

Dear Mr. Price:

On August 9, 2002, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued Bulletin 2002-02, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head and Vessel Head Penetration Nozzle Inspection Programs." The Bulletin requested addressees to provide information related to their reactor pressure vessel (RPV) head and vessel head penetration (VHP) nozzle inspection programs for their respective facilities, including a summary discussion of inspection program plans to supplement their required visual inspections with non-visual nondestructive examination methods, or justification for reliance on visual examinations as the primary method to detect degradation. Addressees were requested to respond to Item 1 of the Bulletin within 30 days of its issuance, or within 15 days of its issuance, to provide an alternative course of action, including the basis for acceptability of the proposed action.

By letter dated September 11, 2002, you provided a response to Item 1 of the Bulletin, noting the plans to perform RPV head and VHP nozzle inspections at MP3. The response also noted that MP3 is in the category of plants considered to have low susceptibility to RPV head and VHP cracking, based on a susceptibility ranking of less than 8 effective degradation years.

The NRC staff has reviewed your response to Item 1 of the Bulletin. The staff found your immediate inspection plan to perform a 100% bare metal visual examination during the September 2002 refueling outage to be adequate for providing reasonable assurance that existing regulatory requirements would be met.

The staff notes that your justification for reliance on visual examinations and long-term inspection plans refer to the Electric Power Research Institute Materials Reliability Program (MRP) inspection plan for PWR RPV upper head penetrations. The staff has not completed its review of the MRP inspection plan and, as such, has not made a determination on the adequacy of the plan for ensuring applicable regulatory requirements are met. The staff's assessment of your justification and the adequacy of your long-term inspection program plans will be determined upon completion of the staff's review of the MRP proposed inspection plan.

Also, please note that as stated in Item 2 of Bulletin 2002-02, you are requested to report to the Commission your inspection scope and results within 30 days after plant restart following the inspection of the RPV head and VHP nozzles.

J. Price

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Please contact me at (301) 415-1484 if you have any questions on this issue.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Victor Nerses, Sr. Project Manager, Section 2
Project Directorate I
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-423

cc: See next page

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Sincerely,

/RA/

Victor Nerses, Sr. Project Manager, Section 2
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Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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