

The NRC has received the 15-day responses to Bulletin 2002-01, "Reactor Pressure Vessel Head Degradation and Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary Integrity," from all 69 Pressurized Water Reactors except for Davis-Besse, who indicated they will provide a response after completing their root cause evaluation (i.e., findings at Davis-Besse were the basis for the Bulletin).

The staff completed its first detailed review of the licensee responses and has not identified any plants with conditions similar to those that lead to the degradation at Davis-Besse. Typical information that licensees provided to show that they do not have the conditions identified at Davis-Besse include:

- Some plants have no history of boric acid leakage
- Many plants correct leaks as they are found, and in some cases, before the boric acid has reached the reactor pressure vessel head
- Some plants that have had leaks that reach the insulation, will inspect under the insulation, and clean any boric acid found on the reactor vessel head
- Many plants have already completed "bare-metal" inspections (i.e., inspections under the insulation) to identify any signs of boric acid leakage

Some plants have reported localized, minor degradation of the reactor vessel head as a result of boric acid (some of which are summarized in previous generic communications). The degradation is limited and does not represent a structural integrity concern.

Regarding future inspection plans, many licensees that do not have insulation restrictions plan to perform "bare-metal" inspections above the head and in some cases under the head volumetric examinations of those nozzles with visual indications of boric acid on the reactor pressure vessel head. Some plants with insulation restrictions plan to perform inspections above the insulation and under the head volumetric examinations. A few plants plan to replace their insulation to permit more efficient and effective inspections. In addition, some plants plan to replace their reactor pressure vessel heads during future refueling outages.

Recognizing we do not know the root cause, the staff placed plants into several categories including "No Concerns", high, medium, and low priority. The high, medium, and low categorization is simply a priority scheme for contacting the licensees and asking additional clarifying information and does not reflect a need for immediate regulatory action or concern on the part of the staff. The priority scheme was based on the ability of the reviewer to write a justification for continual operation for the plant.

1. High priority (7 plants): Beaver Valley 1, Callaway, Fort Calhoun, Indian Point 2, Indian Point 3, Salem 2, and St. Lucie 1
2. Medium priority (4 plants): Calvert Cliffs 1, San Onofre 2, Sequoyah 1, and Sequoyah 2
3. Low priority (8 plants): Catawba 1, Catawba 2, Farley 2, Harris, Millstone 3, Point Beach 1, Point Beach 2, and San Onofre 3

No concern (49 plants)

Based on the review of the 15-day responses, in some cases, the staff will issue questions to confirm or verify the information provided in response to Bulletin 2002-01.

Additionally, the NRC staff has contacted licensees who have or will enter refueling outages since the Davis-Besse degradation was found. The NRC is conducting telephone conferences with these licensees prior to plant start-up to discuss their inspection results. Documentation of these discussions with the licensees are on the NRC Web page. For plants that shut down this spring, based on the current understanding of the root cause at Davis-Besse, the NRC did not identify any issues with the licensee inspection results that warranted additional regulatory action.