



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
REGION IV  
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ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-4005

August 31, 2007

Joseph E. Venable  
Vice President of Operations  
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River Bend Station  
5485 US Highway 61N  
St. Francisville, LA 70775

SUBJECT: MID-CYCLE PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND INSPECTION PLAN -  
RIVER BEND STATION

Dear Mr. Venable:

On August 9, 2007, the NRC staff completed its performance review of the River Bend Station for the first half of the calendar year 2007 assessment cycle. Our technical staff reviewed performance indicators for the most recent quarter and inspection results over the previous 12 months. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our assessment of your safety performance during this period and our plans for future inspections at your facility.

This performance review and enclosed inspection plan do not include security information. A separate letter designated and marked as "Official Use Only--Security Information" will include the security cornerstone review and resultant inspection plan.

Plant performance for the most recent quarter at River Bend Station was within the Licensee Response Column of the NRC's Action Matrix, based on all inspection findings being classified as having very low safety significance (Green) and all performance indicators indicating performance at a level requiring no additional NRC oversight (Green).

Our March 2, 2007, annual assessment letter identified a substantive cross-cutting issue in the area of human performance associated with instances of ineffective human error techniques within the work practices component. We noted that the actions taken by your staff, which included more on-shift supervisory observations of operations and maintenance activities, had not yet proven effective. During this assessment period, the NRC staff has identified a continuing substantive cross-cutting issue in the human performance component of work practices related to the aspect of ineffective human error prevention techniques.

During this assessment period, there were ten findings related to the theme of ineffective human error prevention techniques. These findings affected the Initiating Events and the Barrier Integrity cornerstones. Examples include: the failure to install scram discharge instrument volume vent plugs following a surveillance activity resulting in a reactor coolant leak and unintentional personnel contaminations; the load line analysis being exceeded during power ascension, which resulted in a control rod block actuation; and the failure to follow maintenance instructions which adversely affected the instrument air system. On July 5, 2007,

during a public meeting with the NRC, you provided further details on your improvement plan and informed us that workers are aware of human error prevention techniques but have not consistently/rigorously used them, and that there continues to be inconsistent focus and alignment on error prevention behaviors. As a result, you have further refined your corrective actions and are focusing on the following four key areas: clarifying standards and alignment, establishing line ownership, ensuring accountability, and operations crew performance. However, these actions have not yet proven effective in substantially mitigating this cross-cutting theme for a sustained period of time. As a result, this substantive cross-cutting issue will remain open until we determine, through focused baseline inspections, that corrective actions implemented in accordance with your improvement plan have resulted in sustained improved performance.

Although we noted a continuing theme in the human performance component of resources specifically related to the aspect of procedure and work instruction adequacy, recent performance in this area has improved as indicated by only one finding related to procedure and work instruction adequacy since the last assessment. On this basis we have concluded that the scope of your efforts to address this area continues to be effective.

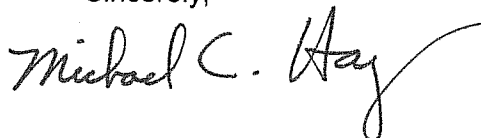
In our mid-cycle performance assessment letter dated August 31, 2006, a substantive cross-cutting issue in the area of problem identification and resolution was identified based on a number of findings involving the aspect associated with complete, accurate, and timely identification of issues. In our annual assessment letter dated March 2, 2007, the substantive cross-cutting issue remained open pending the completion of your effectiveness reviews and our assessment that corrective actions resulted in sustained improved performance. On the basis of the results of your effectiveness reviews and a sustained reduction in the number of findings, the NRC is closing this substantive cross-cutting issue.

The enclosed inspection plan details the inspections, except those related to security, scheduled through December 31, 2008. The inspection plan is provided to allow for the resolution of any scheduling conflicts and personnel availability issues well in advance of inspector arrival onsite. Routine resident inspections are not listed due to their ongoing and continuous nature. The inspections in the last nine months of the inspection plan are tentative and may be revised at the end-of-cycle review.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be made available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

The NRC is currently evaluating the scope and frequency of all baseline inspection procedures. If the results of the evaluation, or any other circumstances, cause us to change the inspection plan, we will contact you to discuss the change as soon as possible. Please contact Michael Hay, Chief, Division of Reactor Projects, at (817) 860-8144 with any questions you may have regarding this letter or the inspection plan.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Hay, Chief  
Project Branch C  
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket: 50-458  
License: NPF-47

Enclosure:  
River Bend Station Inspection/Activity Plan

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SUNSI Review Completed: MCH ADAMS:  Yes  No Initials: MCH  
 Publicly Available  Non-Publicly Available  Sensitive  Non-Sensitive

R:\ REACTORS\EOC and Midcycle\Midcycle Assessment Letters\2007\RBS

RIV/SPE/DRP/C	SRI/RBS	C/DRP/C	D/DRS	D/DRP
WCWalker*	GFLarkin	MCHay*	DDChamberlain*	ATHowell III
/RA/	<i>E-WCWalker for</i>	/RA/	/RA/	<i>up</i>
08/16/07	08/20/07	08/16/07	08/16/07	08/20/07

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T=Telephone

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\*Previous Concurrence

Unit Number	Inspection Activity	Title	No. of Staff on Site	Planned Dates Start	Planned Dates End	Inspection Type
	<b>RP-ORS4 - OCCUPATIONAL RADIATION SAFETY-ACCESS</b>		1			
1	IP 7112101	Access Control to Radiologically Significant Areas		10/22/2007	10/26/2007	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7112102	ALARA Planning and Controls		10/22/2007	10/26/2007	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		10/22/2007	10/26/2007	Baseline Inspections
	<b>EB1-08G - ISI</b>		1			
1	IP 7111108G	Inservice Inspection Activities - BWR		01/14/2008	01/18/2008	Baseline Inspections
	<b>RP-ORS1 - OCCUPATIONAL RADIATION SAFETY-ALARA</b>		1			
1	IP 7112101	Access Control to Radiologically Significant Areas		02/04/2008	02/08/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7112102	ALARA Planning and Controls		02/04/2008	02/08/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification		02/04/2008	02/08/2008	Baseline Inspections
	<b>EB1-21 - CDBI</b>		6			
1	IP 7111121	Component Design Bases Inspection		05/12/2008	05/16/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7111121	Component Design Bases Inspection		05/26/2008	06/06/2008	Baseline Inspections
	<b>EB2-07B - BIENNIAL HEAT SINK INSPECTION</b>		1			
1	IP 7111107B	Heat Sink Performance		05/05/2008	05/09/2008	Baseline Inspections
	<b>RP-ORS2 - OCCUPATIONAL RADIATION SAFETY - ACCESS</b>		1			
1	IP 7112101	Access Control to Radiologically Significant Areas		05/05/2008	05/09/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7112102	ALARA Planning and Controls		05/05/2008	05/09/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151-OR01	Occupational Exposure Control Effectiveness		05/05/2008	05/09/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151-PR01	RETS/ODCM Radiological Effluent		05/05/2008	05/09/2008	Baseline Inspections
	<b>EP1 - EP EXERCISE</b>		3			
1	IP 7111401	Exercise Evaluation		06/09/2008	06/13/2008	Baseline Inspections
	<b>REQUAL - BIENNIAL REQUAL</b>		1			
1	IP 7111111B	Licensed Operator Requalification Program		09/01/2008	09/05/2008	Baseline Inspections
	<b>RP-ORS3 - OCCUPATIONAL RADIATION SAFETY</b>		1			
1	IP 7112101	Access Control to Radiologically Significant Areas		10/20/2008	10/24/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 7112102	ALARA Planning and Controls		10/20/2008	10/24/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151-OR01	Occupational Exposure Control Effectiveness		10/20/2008	10/24/2008	Baseline Inspections
1	IP 71151-PR01	RETS/ODCM Radiological Effluent		10/20/2008	10/24/2008	Baseline Inspections

This report does not include INPO and OUTAGE activities.  
 This report shows only on-site and announced inspection procedures.