



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
REGION IV
1600 EAST LAMAR BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76011-4511

May 31, 2018

Mr. Brad Sawatzke, Chief Executive Officer
Energy Northwest
MD 1023
P.O. Box 968
Richland, WA 99352

SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR COLUMBIA GENERATING
STATION

Dear Mr. Sawatzke:

As a result of its continuous review of plant performance, the NRC updated its assessment of Columbia Generating Station. The NRC's evaluation consisted of a review of performance indicators and inspection results. This letter informs you of the NRC's assessment and its plans for future inspections at your facility. This letter updates the annual assessment letter issued on March 1, 2018 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. ML18057A398), and the follow-up assessment letter issued on November 16, 2017 (ADAMS Accession No. ML17320A265), based on the NRC staff's recent decision regarding an input related to the Unplanned Scrams with Complications performance indicator for Columbia Generating Station.

As described in our November 16, 2017, letter, the NRC's review of Columbia Generating Station had identified that the Unplanned Scrams with Complications performance indicator crossed the Green-to-White threshold due to two unplanned scrams with complications within a four-quarter period, specifically related to scrams that occurred in December 2016 and August 2017. As such, this performance indicator data was considered a White input into the Reactor Oversight Program (ROP) Action Matrix for the NRC to consider relative to the station's performance. Subsequently, on March 1, 2018, your staff submitted a performance indicator Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) during the monthly ROP Public Meeting with the NRC staff. In FAQ No. 18-03, your staff requested a plant-specific exemption from the guidance related to the Unplanned Scrams with Complications performance indicator due to unique circumstances surrounding the plant scram on August 20, 2017. (A summary of the meeting, including your staff's FAQ 18-03 submittal, may be found in ADAMS Package Accession No. ML18072A036).

The request for a plant-specific exemption from counting the August 20, 2017, scram as a complicated scram was approved at a May 24, 2018, public meeting with the ROP Task Force (ADAMS Accession No. ML18144A977). However, the scram continues to count as an unplanned scram in the related performance indicator, Unplanned Scrams per 7000 Critical Hours. With the August 20, 2017, scram not counted as complicated, the Unplanned Scrams with Complications performance indicator was retroactively recalculated such that the indicator remained in the green band with only one input (the December 2016 scram) in the four quarter period of the 4th quarter 2016 through the 3rd quarter 2017; therefore, the Unplanned Scrams with Complications performance indicator is not considered a White input for the NRC's

assessment of the station's performance during that period per the ROP Action Matrix. In our March 1, 2018, letter, the NRC indicated that we planned to conduct the Inspection Procedure 95001, "Supplemental Inspection Response to Action Matrix Column 2 Inputs," however, since the performance indicator is no longer considered a White input, the NRC no longer plans to conduct that inspection.

As such, in consideration that (1) the Unplanned Scrams with Complications performance indicator is considered to have remained in the green band as a result of the NRC's approval of the exemption requested by your staff in FAQ 18-03, (2) all other performance indicators remain in the expected band (i.e., Green), and (3) there are no open greater-than-green findings for the station, the NRC has determined the performance at Columbia Generating Station returned to the Licensee Response Column of the ROP Action Matrix effective January 1, 2018. Therefore, the NRC plans to conduct ROP baseline inspections at your facility.

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

Please contact Mark Haire at 817-200-1148 with any questions you have regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Anton Vegel, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket No. 50-397
License No. NPF-21

ASSESSMENT FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR COLUMBIA GENERATING STATION – DATED
MAY 31, 2018

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ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML18151A379

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