

RS-00-45



July 31, 2000

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
ATTN: Document Control Desk  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Braidwood Station, Units 1 and 2  
Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-72 and NPF-77  
NRC Docket Nos. STN 50-456 and STN 50-457

Byron Station, Units 1 and 2  
Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-37 and NPF-66  
NRC Docket Nos. STN 50-454 and STN 50-455

Subject: Steam Generator Laser Welded Sleeves

Reference: Letter from R. R. Assa (U.S. NRC) to D. L. Farrar (Commonwealth Edison Company), " Issuance of Amendments (TAC NOS. M87227, M87228, M87229, M87230)," dated March 4, 1994

In the Reference letter, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) approved Amendments 46 and 58 to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF-72, NPF-77, NPF-37 and NPF-66, and Appendix A, Technical Specifications (TS), for Braidwood Station, Units 1 and 2, and Byron Station, Units 1 and 2, respectively. These amendments allowed the installation of laser welded sleeves as an alternative to plugging defective steam generator tubes. Since the time these amendments were issued, a generic issue concerning the acceptable width of laser welds used to secure steam generator tube sleeves to their respective tubes has been resolved in discussions between Westinghouse and the NRC.

Westinghouse has informed ComEd of the proposed resolution for this issue. Westinghouse has modified its recommended inspection procedure for future welds to include a criterion that establishes the minimum average width of each weld in order to meet the requirements of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code, Section III, "Rules for Construction of Nuclear Power Plant Components," for design-by-analysis. Any welds determined to have an average width of less than 21 mils will be evaluated by engineering personnel to determine their

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adequacy. Using this methodology, special considerations may be made to provide for infrequently accepting welds with average widths of not less than 19 mils.

The Byron Station and Braidwood Station original Unit 1 Westinghouse Model D4 steam generators have been replaced with Babcock and Wilcox International (BWI) steam generators. Therefore, the laser welded sleeve repair option no longer applies to Unit 1 at each station as the Westinghouse Technical Report addressing laser welded sleeves applies only to Westinghouse Model D4 and D5 steam generators. Consequently, this repair option applies only to the Byron Station and Braidwood Station Unit 2 Westinghouse Model D5 steam generators. There are currently no laser welded sleeves installed in the Unit 2 steam generators at either station. Should we decide to install laser welded sleeves in the Unit 2 steam generators in the future, these laser welded sleeves will be installed in accordance with the criteria established by Westinghouse as described above.

Please address any comments or questions regarding this matter to Mr. J. A. Bauer at (630) 663-7287.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. M. Krich', is positioned above the printed name.

R. M. Krich  
Vice President - Regulatory Services

cc: Regional Administrator- USNRC, RIII  
NRC Senior Resident Inspector-Braidwood  
NRC Senior Resident Inspector-Byron