

2.1 SAFETY LIMITS

BASES

2.1.1 REACTOR CORE

The restrictions of this safety limit prevent overheating of the fuel cladding and possible cladding perforation which would result in the release of fission products to the reactor coolant. Overheating of the fuel is prevented by maintaining the steady state peak linear heat rate at or less than the fuel centerline melt linear heat rate limit. Centerline fuel melting will not occur for this peak linear heat rate. Overheating of the fuel cladding is prevented by restricting fuel operation to within the nucleate boiling regime where the heat transfer coefficient is large and the cladding surface temperature is slightly above the coolant saturation temperature.

Operation above the upper boundary of the nucleate boiling regime could result in excessive cladding temperatures because of the onset of departure from nucleate boiling (DNB) and the resultant sharp reduction in heat transfer coefficient. DNB is not a directly measurable parameter during operation and therefore THERMAL POWER and Reactor Coolant Temperature and Pressure have been related to DNB through the XNB correlation. The XNB DNB correlation has been developed to predict the DNB flux and the location of DNB for axially uniform and non-uniform heat flux distributions. The local DNB heat flux ratio, DNBR, defined as the ratio of the heat flux that would cause DNB at a particular core location to the local heat flux, is indicative of the margin to DNB.

The minimum value of the DNBR during steady state operation, normal operational transients, and anticipated transients is limited to 1.17. This value corresponds to a 95 percent probability at a 95 percent confidence level that DNB will not occur and is chosen as an appropriate margin to DNB for all operating conditions.

The curves of Figure 2.1-1 show the loci of points of THERMAL POWER, Reactor Coolant System pressure and maximum cold leg temperature with four Reactor Coolant Pumps operating for which the minimum DNBR is no less than 1.17. The limits in Figure 2.1-1 were calculated for reactor coolant inlet temperatures less than or equal to 580°F. The dashed line at 580°F coolant inlet temperatures is not a safety limit; however, operation above 580°F is not possible because of the actuation of the main steam line safety valves which limit the maximum value of reactor inlet temperature. Reactor operation at THERMAL POWER levels higher than 111.6% of RATED THERMAL POWER is prohibited by the high power level trip setpoint specified in Table 2.2-1. The area of safe operation is below and to the left of these lines.