April 20, 2001

MEMORANDUM TO: File

FROM: Robert E. Moody, Project Manager, Section 1 ***/RA/***
Project Directorate IV & Decommissioning
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

SUBJECT: RIVER BEND STATION, UNIT 1, RE: PROPOSED LICENSE AMENDMENT TO REMOVE THE INCLINED FUEL TRANSFER SYSTEM (IFTS) BLIND FLANGE AT POWER (TAC NO. MA7827)

The purpose of this memorandum is to document and place into the public U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff discussions with Entergy Operations, Inc., the licensee, with regard to its December 20, 1999, license amendment request (LAR) 99-30, "IFTS Blind Flange."

On April 11, 2001, the NRC provided the licensee, via facsimile, the attached list of draft questions. These draft questions do not represent final NRC positions and may be revised/eliminated as a result of discussions with the licensee.

Docket No. 50-458

Attachment: As stated

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DRAFT QUESTIONS

Additional Questions Regarding Entergy's April 6, 2001 Supplement to
License Amendment Request 1999-30, "IFTS Blind Flange" for River Bend

1. In the estimate of IFTS drain valve total open time, the licensee states that "the flap and fill valves would be open the remainder of the time, approximately 51 days." It seems more reasonable that the flap and fill valves would be open for an amount roughly equal to the time the drain valves would be open (about 9 days), and closed at all other times (42 days out of 60). With the valves open as proposed, there is only a single barrier and the plant is susceptible to upper pool drain down for a much longer time than appropriate. The commitment to maintain the second IFTS drain line MOV closed during periods when the IFTS is not operating should be extended to include the closing the flap and fill valves as well.

2. The second column of the Containment Failure Pressure Table indicates that the median failure pressure of the IFTS (blind flange removed) is 62 psig. The November 29, 2000 RAI response said the mean failure pressure of the tube is 62 psig. The licensee needs to clarify whether: (1) the pressures in the table are mean or median values, and (2) the leakage areas reported in the table are median values or point estimates.

3. The fourth column of the Containment Failure Pressure Table indicates that the leakage area for the IFTS with blind flange installed is "12 sq in", and the leakage area for the IFTS with blind flange removed is "uncontrolled." It is not clear what leakage flow path is assumed for each case, and why the failure modes/leakage areas are different. Further explanation is needed as to why these values are different.

4. Regarding the Containment Failure Probability Contribution table, please explain whether the characterization of IFTS tube failure with blind flange installed as a "12 sq in" leak area, and the characterization of IFTS tube failure with blind flange removed as "uncontrolled" (see item 3 above) accounts for the higher likelihood of gross containment failure with blind flange removed (e.g., column 5 versus column 3 for a pressure of 75 psi). If the values in the table are a result of inconsistent treatment of the failure mode/area for the two IFTS failure cases, a revised table and revised delta LERF estimates should be provided based on consistent assumptions.

5. In a previous phone call, the licensee indicated that they would clarify the definition of LERF used in the PRA (i.e., whether it corresponds to a 6 inch or a 12 diameter breach). This was not included and should be added.

6. It is not clear whether the time spent for IFTS maintenance and training during Outage 8 is typical of other outages or a unique situation. The licensee needs to discuss how much time was involved in maintenance of the IFTS system in prior outages other than Outage 8.