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November 30, 2001

Docket Nos. 50-321
50-366

HL-6155

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant
Requirement for One Time Extension of
Technical Specification 3.8.1 for the Swing Diesel Generator

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Following is a request for a one-time only emergency change to the Hatch Unit 1 and 2 Technical Specifications concerning the 1B emergency diesel generator. This proposal is being submitted under the provisions of 10 CFR 50.91. Southern Nuclear, Plant Hatch requests an extension of the required out of service time for the 1B diesel generator given in specification 3.8.1. B, from 7 to 14 days as submitted in our report for a permanent Technical Specification change.

The reasons for the request are detailed below:

On 11/28/2001 the 1B diesel generator tripped approximately four minutes into its 24 hour run with it fully loaded on high crankcase pressure. The 24 hour run was part of TS surveillance 3.8.1.12 and the trip prevented the test from being completed. Consequently, the diesel was declared inoperable on 11/28/01 at 0947 EST.

Investigations as to the cause of the problem were immediately initiated and continued through 11/30/01. Potential problems were believed to include water in the lube oil flashing at a high temperature causing the pressure increase, scuffed cylinder liners or cracked pistons, or blockage of the lube oil filter or strainer vent lines, and blowby of pressure from the top of the pistons to the crankcase.

Additionally, a vendor (Fairbanks-Morse) representative is at the Hatch site to help with the troubleshooting efforts. Unfortunately, following initial investigations neither site engineers nor the vendor are able to provide assurances of diesel operability. Consequently, it could be necessary to disassemble the diesel generator to categorically determine the problem.

Required Action Statement (RAS) 3.8.1.B.4 will require both units to be in hot shutdown on Wednesday December 5, 2001. All efforts are being made, and will continue to be made, to repair the 1B diesel before the RAS expires. However, if engine components are found damaged and in need of replacement, this may require exceeding the RAS, due to difficulties which may arise from procurement, dedication and installation of the new parts.

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U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Page 2

November 30, 2001

On August 30, 2001, Southern Nuclear submitted a permanent Technical Specification change request to increase the diesel generator RAS from 3 to 14 days for the dedicated diesels, and from 7 to 14 days for the swing 1B diesel generator, the subject of this request. That amendment request was based in large part on rigorous probabilistic risk arguments. Those arguments apply in the case of this requested one time change.

As previously mentioned, the 24 hour run was being made to satisfy TS SR 3.8.12. Previous to that, there were no indications of a problem of this type so there was no way to anticipate this situation.

Accordingly, we respectfully request a one time change to the Hatch Unit 1 and 2 Technical Specifications to revise LCO 3.8.1.B.4 to allow a 14 day completion time for the swing diesel generator, as opposed to the present 7 day completion time. Of course we also request that you continue your review of the permanent change to the diesel generator completion times. Should you have any questions in this regard, please contact this office.

Respectfully submitted,



H. L. Sumner, Jr.

OCV/eb

cc: Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Mr. P. H. Wells, Nuclear Plant General Manager
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