

June 13, 2003

Mr. J. B. Beasley
Vice President - Farley Project
Southern Nuclear Operating
Company, Inc.
Post Office Box 1295
Birmingham, Alabama 35201-1295

SUBJECT: JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT 2 RE: ISSUANCE OF
AMENDMENTS (TAC NO. MB8229)

Dear Mr. Beasley:

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued the enclosed Amendment No. 151 to Facility Operating License No. NPF-8 for the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Unit 2. The amendment consists of changes to the Technical Specifications in response to your application dated March 31, 2003, as supplemented by letter dated April 29, 2003.

The amendment modifies Surveillance Requirement (SR) 3.4.11.1, for Farley, Unit 2 only, by the addition of the following note that states, "Not required to be performed for Unit 2 for the remainder of Operating Cycle 16 for Q2B31MOV800B." In addition, a temporary Technical Specification SR 3.4.11.4 is added to provide compensatory action for this block valve while SR 3.4.11.1 is suspended. Further, this SR requires that power to the Farley, Unit 2, Power Operated Relief Valve Q2B31MOV8000B be checked at least every 24 hours for the remainder of Operating Cycle 16.

A copy of the related Safety Evaluation is also enclosed. A Notice of Issuance will be included in the Commission's biweekly *Federal Register* notice.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Frank Rinaldi, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-364

Enclosures:

1. Amendment No. 151 to NPF-8
2. Safety Evaluation

cc w/encls: See next page

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Frinaldi

ADAMS Accession No: ML031680635 * No major change to SE** See previous concurrence

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| NAME | FRinaldi | CHawes | DTerao | RDennig | RHoefling | CGratton for JNakoski |
| DATE | 6/10/03 | 6/11/03 | 4/23/03 | 06/03/03 | 06/02/03 | 6/11/03 |

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY

ATTACHMENT TO LICENSE AMENDMENT NO. 151

TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-8

DOCKET NO. 50-364

Replace the following pages of the Appendix A Technical Specifications and associated Bases with the attached revised pages. The revised pages are identified by amendment number and contain marginal lines indicating the areas of change.

Remove

3.4.11-3
3.4.11-4
B 3.4.11-7
B 3.4.11-8

Insert

3.4.11-3
3.4.11-4
B 3.4.11-7
B 3.4.11-8

SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY, INC.

ALABAMA POWER COMPANY

DOCKET NO. 50-364

JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT 2

AMENDMENT TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE

Amendment No. 151
License No. NPF-8

1. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) has found that:
 - A. The application for amendment by Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (Southern Nuclear), dated March 31, 2003, as supplemented by letter dated April 29, 2003, complies with the standards and requirements of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (the Act), and the Commission's rules and regulations set forth in 10 CFR Chapter I;
 - B. The facility will operate in conformity with the application, the provisions of the Act, and the rules and regulations of the Commission;
 - C. There is reasonable assurance (i) that the activities authorized by this amendment can be conducted without endangering the health and safety of the public, and (ii) that such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations;
 - D. The issuance of this license amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public; and
 - E. The issuance of this amendment is in accordance with 10 CFR Part 51 of the Commission's regulations and all applicable requirements have been satisfied.
2. Accordingly, the license is amended by changes to the Technical Specifications, as indicated in the attachment to this license amendment; and paragraph 2.C.(2) of Facility Operating License No. NPF-8 is hereby amended to read as follows:

(2) Technical Specifications

The Technical Specifications contained in Appendices A and B, as revised through Amendment No. 151, are hereby incorporated in the license. Southern Nuclear shall operate the facility in accordance with the Technical Specifications.

3. This license amendment is effective as of its date of issuance and shall be implemented within 30 days of issuance.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

/RA by C. Gratton Acting for/

John A. Nakoski, Chief, Section 1
Project Directorate II
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Attachment:
Changes to the Technical
Specifications

Date of Issuance: June 13, 2003

SAFETY EVALUATION BY THE OFFICE OF NUCLEAR REACTOR REGULATION
RELATED TO AMENDMENT NO. 151 TO FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. NPF-8
SOUTHERN NUCLEAR OPERATING COMPANY, INC., ET AL.
JOSEPH M. FARLEY NUCLEAR PLANT, UNIT 2
DOCKET NO. 50-364

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By letter dated March 31, 2003, as supplemented by letter dated April 29, 2003, the Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc. (the licensee) et al., submitted a request for changes to the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Unit 2 (Farley-2), Technical Specifications (TS). The requested changes would revise TS Surveillance Requirements (SRs) 3.4.11.1 and 3.4.11.4 by deleting the requirement to cycle power-operated relief valve (PORV) block-valve Q2B31MOV8000B every 92 days for the remainder of Operating Cycle 16 at Farley-2. Operating Cycle 16 is presently scheduled to end March 2004. The licensee will verify every 24 hours that power is available to operate PORV block-valve Q2B31MOV8000B. If a plant shutdown and cool down is required prior to the next refueling outage, the valve will be repaired prior to plant restart.

This change is needed as a result of packing leakage from the subject valve during stroke testing on March 10, 2003. The leakage only occurs during stroke testing when the valve is neither fully open nor fully closed. There is no leakage in the currently configured normally full open position. The licensee stated that the maximum expected packing leakage is substantially less than the normal make-up capability of the charging system. The licensee also states that the risk associated with shutting down the plant to repair the packing leak is greater than the risk to continue to operate without repairing the leak or performing the cycle test as required by plant TS.

The April 29, 2003, letter provided clarifying information regarding planned packing reconfiguration for block valve Q2B31MOV8000B that did not change the application, nor the initial proposed no significant hazards consideration determination.

2.0 REGULATORY EVALUATION

Specifically, Farley-2 TS currently requires that each power operated relief block valve be demonstrated operable by full-stroke exercising the valve at least once per 92 days.

The 1990 Edition of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) for Operation and Maintenance of Nuclear Power Plants (OM) Code is the Code of record for the Farley-2 Inservice Testing Program. The licensee's proposed TS change is consistent with ASME OM

Code requirements for testing Category B power-operated valves as supplemented by the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) guidance in Generic Letter (GL) 89-04 and NUREG 1482. There are no changes to any Code requirement or Code acceptance criteria.

3.0 TECHNICAL EVALUATION

In its submittal of March 31, 2003, the licensee states that, "The risk associated with shutting down and cooling down the plant to repair the PORV block valve packing, while not quantified, is recognized to be higher than the risk associated with this PORV block valve failure to close on demand. ... In addition, the potential operational impact of continuing to cycle test the PORV is substantial."

The NRC staff has reviewed the licensee's regulatory and technical analyses in support of the proposed TS amendment. The following NRC staff's evaluation supports the conclusion that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by the operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

3.1 TS SR 3.4.11.1

The licensee has proposed to add a note stating that the SR is not required to be performed for valve Q2B31MOV8000B for the remainder of Operating Cycle 16. The ASME OM Code in subsection ISTC 4.2.1.2 allows the stroke testing of Category B valves during a cold shutdown if testing at power is not practicable. The licensee has determined that testing Q2B31MOV8000B at power is not practicable, because continued stroking may cause the packing leakage to worsen.

The leakage only occurs during the stroking of the valve and not when the valve is in its full open or full closed position. Block valve stem leakage is routed to the reactor coolant drain tank (RCDT). The RCDT collects water from other sources in containment including the reactor coolant pump number 2 seals and provides level and temperature control for the pressurizer relief tank. Leakage past the valve packing has the potential to overpressurize the RCDT thus stopping drain flows and causing inadequate control of the pressurizer relief tank resulting in the need to shut down the unit.

Valve Q2B31MOV8000B is a 3-inch, motor-operated gate valve. It has an active safety function to close upon demand following the failure of a PORV. The block-valve is included in the Farley-2 GL-89-10 program. The licensee states that the valve is highly reliable. The valve has been stroke tested acceptably twice during the current cycle. Based upon past history, there is reasonable assurance that the valve will close when called upon, with or without additional stroke testing.

The proposed change will reduce operating risk by eliminating the potential for a unit shutdown due to either excessive leakage past the block valve stem or due to the overpressurization of the RCDT. The proposed change is in accordance with the ASME OM Code.

3.2 TS SR 3.4.11.4

The licensee has proposed to add a note requiring that power to Q2B31MOV8000B be verified to be available at least every 24 hours for the remainder of Operating Cycle 16. The intent is to provide compensatory action while SR 3.4.11.1 is suspended. The NRC staff finds that this is a good practice and provides a level of assurance of the ability of the block valve to close when called upon.

3.3 Conclusion

The proposed change to delete the requirement to stroke PORV block valve Q2B31MOV8000B every 92 days will minimize the Farley-2 operating risk by reducing the potential for additional valve packing degradation that may result in a forced unit shutdown. This change is consistent with required codes and standards and is in compliance with current regulatory guidance regarding the interval between and methods for stroke testing Category B power operated valves, and is, therefore, acceptable.

The licensee has committed to replacing the existing packing with a style consistent with Q2B31MOV8000A and the Farley, Unit 1, PORV block valves during the next refueling outage or plant shutdown and cooldown, whichever occurs first. The packing replacement is intended to reduce the potential for leakage and to maintain a consistent packing configuration among the Farley's PORV block valves. The NRC staff finds this commitment is reasonable and prudent.

The NRC staff concludes, based on the considerations discussed above, that: (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by the operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

4.0 STATE CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Commission's regulations, the State of Alabama official was notified of the proposed issuance of the amendment. The State official had no comments.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION

The amendment changes a requirement with respect to installation or use of a facility component located within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20 and change the surveillance requirement. The NRC staff has determined that the amendment involves no significant increase in the amounts and no significant change in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite and that there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. The Commission has previously issued a proposed finding that the amendment involves no significant hazards consideration, and there has been no public comment on such finding (68 FR 25658). Accordingly, the amendment meets the eligibility criteria for categorical exclusion set forth in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(9). Pursuant to 10 CFR 51.22(b) no environmental impact statement or environmental assessment need be prepared in connection with the issuance of the amendment.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Commission has concluded, based on the considerations discussed above, that (1) there is reasonable assurance that the health and safety of the public will not be endangered by operation in the proposed manner, (2) such activities will be conducted in compliance with the Commission's regulations, and (3) the issuance of the amendment will not be inimical to the common defense and security or to the health and safety of the public.

7.0 REFERENCES

1. Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations*, Section 50.55a(f).
2. ASME Code for Operation and Maintenance of Nuclear Power Plants, 1990 Edition.
3. Generic Letter 89-04, Guidance on Developing Acceptable Inservice Testing Programs, thru Supplement 1, April 4, 1995.
4. NUREG 1482, Guidelines for Inservice Testing at Nuclear Power Plants, Rev 0.
5. Farley Nuclear Plant, Unit 2, Inservice Testing Program for Pumps and Valves, Third 10-Year Inspection Interval, Rev A, Docket No. 50-384.

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Date: June 13, 2003

Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant

cc:

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