



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555

March 26, 1991

Docket Nos. 50-361
and 50-362

Mr. Harold B. Ray
Senior Vice President
Southern California Edison Co.
Irvine Operations Center
23 Parker Street
Irvine, California 92718

Mr. Gary D. Cotton
Senior Vice President
Engineering and Operations
San Diego Gas & Electric Co.
101 Ash Street
San Diego, California 92112

Gentlemen:

SUBJECT: FUEL ELEMENT ASSEMBLY SHOULDER GAP ADEQUACY (TAC NOS. 79937 AND 79926)

By letter dated March 11, 1991, you requested staff concurrence that San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, Unit Nos. 2 and 3, fuel element assembly shoulder gap is adequate for the design life of the fuel, and to close the San Onofre Unit 3 License Condition 2.C(23). The San Onofre Unit 3 license condition states:

Prior to entering Startup (Mode 2) after each refueling, SCE shall either provide a report that demonstrates that the existing fuel element assembly (FEA) has sufficient available shoulder gap clearance for at least the next cycle of operation, or identify to the NRC and implement a modified FEA design that has adequate shoulder gap clearance for at least the next cycle of operation. The commitment will apply until the NRC concurs that the shoulder gap clearance provided is adequate for the design life of the fuel.

In your letter, you state that the use of a modified 16X16 fuel design with an FEA shoulder gap clearance of 2.382 inches (vs. 1.332 inches initially) will continue to be used in Cycle 6 and future cycles, with each additional cycle having fuel discharge burnups less than or equal to Cycle 5 fuel discharge burnups. Further, you determined that the FEA shoulder gap analysis results were acceptable for the first five cycles of operation for both units and you will continue to evaluate the adequacy of the FEA shoulder gap as a part of your reload analysis.

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Based upon this information, the staff concurs that the FEA shoulder gap clearance provided is adequate for the design life of the fuel. Therefore, the requirements of the San Onofre Unit 3 License Condition 2.C(23) have been met.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Lawrence E. Kokajko, Project Manager
Project Directorate V
Division of Reactor Projects III/IV/V
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

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